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ABSTRACT

A study examined the attitudes of unemployed persons to a range of community-based liberal adult education courses that were organized with their involvement by the Pioneer Work project of the University of Leeds. (Since its inception in 1982, the Pioneer Work project has organized series of 8- to 10-week courses using the community, institutional, organizational, and trade union approaches.) Of the 76 students who participated in the research, 82 percent had left school at the minimum age and more than 90 percent had no experience in higher education. All of the courses covered by the survey were organized with local or issue-based groups and/or other paid workers and agencies. Ninety-three percent of those surveyed wanted their existing courses to continue, even though the courses in question do not provide qualifications or training or lead to jobs. As a result of the liberal courses taken, 42 percent of the participants were progressing to other types of education and others become active in the community as a result of the courses that they took. Nevertheless, the students' responses made it clear that they feel an urgent need for more community-based vocationally-oriented and qualifications-based courses. Appendixes include guidelines for working with tenants and community groups; profiles of two women's discussion groups; and the student, tutor, and longitudinal questionnaires. (MN)

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EDUCATION FROM EVERYDAY LIVING

AN ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED COURSES WITH UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE

by
LINDSEY FRASER
and
KEVIN WARD

Published by NIACE for REPLAN

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Preface and Acknowledgements

This report records the views of unwaged people in Leeds and Bradford who had undertaken liberal adult education courses with the Pioneer Work section of the Department of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Leeds. This section is responsible for developing and evaluating courses with adults who have not previously had access to higher education.

Special thanks, therefore, are due to the students who so willingly and enthusiastically gave of their time. The tutors from these courses were also interviewed; many thanks to all of them for so honestly recounting their experiences.

The DES provided the finance which enabled Pioneer Work to employ Lindsey Fraser on a part-time basis for two years. The DES representative on the Research Steering Committee, Peter Fulford-Jones, and the local HMI, John Steel, have been encouraging and supporting throughout.

Special thanks to Tim Dant for assistance with research methods, Kate Carben and Judy Davies (part-time tutors) and Jaswant Bhavra for typing numerous drafts.

LINDSEY FRASER
Research worker
KEVIN WARD
Research director

Summary of Research Findings

This research examines in detail the responses of unwaged people to a range of community-based liberal adult education courses which were organised with their involvement. Seventy-six students and fifteen tutors from these non-vocational, non-qualification-based courses took part in the research. The courses were organised by the Pioneer Work project of the University of Leeds (Department of Adult and Continuing Education).

1. The participants. Eighty-two percent left school at the minimum age and more than 90% had no experience of higher education. Thirty-two percent had not had paid employment for five years or more.

2. Major unmet need. 'Why should it help me (with employment)? I didn't come here looking for a job.' This summarises the views of many students. Long-term unemployment means that there is an urgent need for more than vocational or qualification-based courses.

3. What kind of courses? Students want courses which are locally-based (for example, in a nursery or a tenants' community flat) and which are concerned initially with their needs and issues which affect them (welfare rights, a women's discussion group at a nursery, a community issues course with tenants' groups). There is an overwhelming preference for group, discussion-based styles of learning rather than tutor-centred approaches.

These and other findings from the research indicate that the Pioneer Work experience can and should be extrapolated to work in those LEAs which do not have extensive community-based programmes, and also to developments in areas other than work with the unemployed.

4. How did the courses start? Sixty-five percent of students learnt about the courses by 'word of mouth'. This illustrates the need for effective outreach strategies, and resources for them.

5. Some outcomes of the courses. Ninety-three percent of participants wanted their existing course to continue. This illustrates the demand for liberal adult education courses in areas of high unemployment, even though they do not provide qualifications or training, nor lead to jobs. As a result of these courses, 42% were progressing to other types of education, while others became active in the community.

6. Local networks and tutor-support. All these courses were organised with local or issue-based groups and/or with other paid workers and agencies. This inter-agency working illustrates the need for more systematic collaborative structures in every town and city. These could take the form of local networks involving both voluntary groups and paid staff. If these were adequately resourced they could fulfil several functions: (a) initiate or co-ordinate tutor-support and training programmes; (b) enable groups and agencies to share experiences, through monitoring and evaluation; (c) examine policy options about community-based provision in their area.

7. This research has clearly illustrated what community-based workers are already aware of: that there is a major unmet need for education which is additional to vocationally-oriented and qualification-based courses. Either new resources must be provided for this kind of work, or there must be a redirection of the major resources currently available for vocational training to this kind of education from everyday living.

1

Introduction

1.1 The National Context of the Research

The Manpower Services Commission (MSC) stated in 1985 that with unemployment '. . . still rising . . . the best assumption for planning purposes is for a continuing high level of unemployment throughout the period (1985–89), and for a level of long-term unemployment remaining at around the one million mark.'[1]

The continuing high level of unemployment is a problem endemic in all advanced industrial societies. The OECD, for example, estimated that in 1983 the Western nations 'would have to create 20,000 more jobs every day for five years, if unemployment is to return to its 1979 level... About 35 million people are jobless in the Western industrialised countries (including Japan). There are around 20 million on the dole in Western Europe alone.'[2]

If this assumption of long-term structural unemployment is accepted, then there are major implications for the whole range of economic and social institutions, including educational and training agencies. Adult education in its widest sense is a key factor in the response to the problem of unemployment, but it is significant that, as with other social institutions, the policies, structures and priorities of contemporary adult education developed in an era of relatively full employment.

MSC schemes alone cannot, of course, 'solve' long-term unemployment, and if large numbers of people are facing prolonged periods without paid employment, then new measures, curricula, approaches, modes of delivery and facilities have to be developed. In adult education, there is some evidence that new approaches are being developed, in spite of financial constraint since the early 1980s. Projects have been established, special appointments made and various reports published.[3] These indicate that the LEAs, the RBs and a wide range of voluntary organisations have started the educational process of responding to unemployment.

The quantity, quality and the type of provision varies enormously both across and within all regions, but there has certainly been a proliferation of activity for unemployed people. This is seen both in 'mainstream' programmes – easier access, a more progressive policy on fee remissions and a reorientation of courses and recruitment practices – as well as in the development of special projects.

McDonald summarises the aims of programmes specifically designed for the unemployed thus:

> These may aim to provide ... basic education, ESL, second-chance, and in-fill (to existing courses). They may be aimed at increasing employability, at job-seeking, at self-employment. They may be concerned with helping people to formulate their educational needs. They may be concerned with helping people to face up to unemployment and make choices for themselves, including the acceptance of alternatives to employment. They may be intending to help people to be more aware of their own interests and abilities with a view to taking the first steps towards any of these possibilities.[4]

Unfortunately, the lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation means that different experiences, knowledge and good practice remain largely ignored. It also makes it difficult to acquire precise information about organisational and educational processes, methods and outcomes.

The NIACE/REPLAN development projects, funded by the DES, should eventually provide valuable information, but as yet, in spite of the reports referred to above, there is insufficient detailed analysis of the processes and the outcomes of various community-based educational programmes with unemployed people. It is hoped that this report will help in a modest way to supply this need.

1.2 The Local Context and the Pioneer Work Project

The research which is the focus of this report was based in a university department of Adult and Continuing Education and involved working in two major cities in West Yorkshire. What follows is an outline of both the geographical area and the institutional setting of the research.

Cities like Leeds and Bradford have suffered from the major decline of manufacturing industries on which they were dependent. In engineering, for example, 12,000 jobs were lost in Leeds between 1974 and 1980. Bradford has been even more adversely affected because of its central dependence upon the textile industry, which has been in long-term and steep decline for decades. Five thousand jobs were lost in Bradford between 1976 and 1980 in its ten largest manufacturing firms, 2,000 jobs being lost from the closure of Thorn Electrics alone. Similarly, in the textiles industry the process of rationalisation and consequent closures reduced the textile work force in Bradford from 73,000 in 1961 to 29,000 in 1977. This particularly affected the employment prospects for women.

Table 1 illustrates the severe scale of redundancies in more recent years.

Table 1. *Redundancies in West Yorkshire*

	Bradford	Leeds	West Yorkshire
January–June 1979	636	1,659	3,521
January–June 1980	2,074	1,940	7,469
July-December 1980	3,704	5,369	15,588

1980 was the peak year for redundancies, but in 1984 there were still twice as many confirmed redundances as in 1977 in Yorkshire and Humberside. Eighty-one firms notified 3,426 redundancies in Leeds in 1984. The rate of closures and redundancies has slowed since 1981, but this is mainly because there is a much smaller manufacturing sector in the area after the previous years of dramatic decline.[5]

The end result of this process of continuous decline is seen in local unemployment rates. Many inner-city wards in Leeds and Bradford have 'official' unemployment rates of well over 20%.

> Long-term unemployment in Leeds stands at record levels. Over 17,000 are officially recognised as having been out of work over 12 months, 40% of the unemployment total. Changes in methods of counting, and unregistered unemployment mean the real figure is probably higher than 25,000 . . . the plight of those suffering long-term unemployment is desperate. Half of those out of work over 30 have been jobless for over a year. Twenty-five percent of the official count, 10,000 people in Leeds, have been out of work longer than two years. For tens of thousands in Leeds, unemployment has taken on the status of a jail sentence and the prospects grow worse.[6]

It was within this context of industrial decline and serious and persistent unemployment that the Department of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Leeds established a Pioneer Work section in 1982. Some of the courses which have been organised by Pioneer Work are the focus for the research in this report.

The primary aims of Pioneer Work are: to develop educationally innovative structures and curricula for educationally disadvantaged groups such as unemployed people; to devise programmes within the community specifically to meet their needs and interests; to develop a wide network of inter-agency links so that the university adult education contribution could complement rather than compete with existing provision, and so that some initiatives, where appropriate, could be handed over to other agencies; and, finally and crucially, monitor and evaluate the overall provision.[7]

Why should a *university* be involved in such work? In recent years, universities have been 'encouraged' by both government and other bodies to build links with the industrial, commercial and professional communities. And, to an extent, they have been successful in achieving these objectives. But there is also a crucial need for universities to interact with and provide educational services for the wider community. A significant part of that role must be the provision of appropriate educational services to those in the community who have not had access to higher education. The extra-mural courses section of the Department of Adult and Continuing Education has, as its central purpose, the provision of a wide-ranging educational programme, of a content and approach appropriate to a university, primarily aimed at this very substantial section of the adult population within the extra-mural area.

The creation of Pioneer Work was a development of the Department's longstanding concern, within this general context, of 'social purpose' adult education, provided for particularly 'disadvantaged' sections of the urban community. Moreover, as is illustrated in more detail in later sections, Pioneer Work has provided a type of liberal, open-ended adult education which is of relevance and benefit to disadvantaged sections of the community, and complements the more vocationally and leisure-oriented concerns of other agencies. This emphasis on developing work with 'disadvantaged' groups means that Pioneer Work's audience is significantly different in terms of educational background from most participants on Responsible Body courses. Finally, as the research function is fundamental to universities, departments of adult education are well-placed to undertake the monitoring and evaluation which are so essential if the rapidly emerging area of community adult education is to be efficiently and effectively developed.

One of the dangers of community adult education provision is that random responses, with no coherence or evaluation of results, will predominate as agencies respond *ad hoc*, both to expressed needs *and* to funding opportunities. In order to use scarce resources effectively, the evaluation of experimental provision is essential. From the earliest planning stages, therefore, Pioneer Work has had a strong research emphasis and close monitoring and evaluation has been of central importance.

Pioneer Work, then, is essentially an action-research project which has provided the base for the more detailed research in this report.

1.3 The Development of Pioneer Work

Since Pioneer Work's inception in 1982, six categories of liberal adult education course have been organised (referred to in detail in section 4.1). These courses have been developed from four approaches, which have provided the basis for subsequent analysis:

- *The Community Approach:* utilising and extending a network of contacts through community groups, small voluntary bodies, tenants' associations and neighbourhood groups.
- *The Institutional Approach:* working with other educational and related bodies (the LEAs, probation service, nurseries, etc.) on an inter-agency basis. The aim was to maximise scarce resources and avoid overlap and duplication.
- *The Organisational Approach:* working in close co-operation with organisations specifically concerned with the unemployed. These include TUC Centres Against Unemployment, Drop-In-Centres and other 'out-of-work' centres.
- *The Trade Union Approach:* the development of contacts at different levels within trade unions to raise the issue of unemployment and explore the feasibility of educational provision for unemployed members.

These four approaches have been analysed and have provided useful lessons for adult educators in a variety of settings.

A major research task in Pioneer Work in its first three years has been an analysis of questions surrounding the initial development of various courses with the four approaches. In practice, how could liberal adult education be developed with groups of unemployed people? How could groups and individuals be contacted and become interested? How could inter-agency links be established to facilitate this work?

It was only when these contextual phases were successful (that is, when different types of courses were actually established in different settings) that further, detailed educational questions could be examined. These are outlined in Chapter 2.

Utilising the Pioneer Work action-research programme, the research has made it possible for detailed interviews to be carried out with tutors and students about their perceptions of, amongst other factors, the processes and learning outcomes of various courses.

The next chapter gives more detail about the research project's aims and objectives and the methodologies which were adopted.

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4. McDonald, *op. cit.*, p 22.
5. Source: *Economic Trends.* West Yorkshire County Council, Number 23, November 1984, Table 2-10 p 65. See also *The Economic and Social Crisis in West Yorkshire.* Leeds: TUCRIC, 1981.
6. Leeds Trades Council, Unemployed Centre, *Annual Report*, 1984–85, p 17.
7. For more detail about the origins and structure of Pioneer Work, see K. Ward *Beyond Tokenism – Unemployment, Adults and Education*, 1983; and K. Ward and R. Taylor (Eds) *Adult Education and the Working Class: Education for the missing millions.* Croom Helm, 1986.

2

Scope and Methods of the Research

2.1 Aims and Objectives of the Research

The primary aim of the research is to gain a clearer insight into the perceptions of students and tutors involved in the Pioneer Work programme and the learning outcomes which emanate from the courses. The research examines in detail a number of specific educational questions. What happens to students on different kinds of courses for the unemployed? What do they see as the uses or value (if any) of this type of adult education? Do they continue in education after these courses, and, if so, in what ways? Or do these courses have other consequences and outcomes? Which courses (if any) do other agencies take over? How do tutors facilitate learning processes on different types of courses?

The information gained from the research should provide valuable data about the relevance or otherwise of liberal adult education for different groups of unemployed people, as well as the varied outcomes and the fate of different types of courses. It is hoped that this research will be of value to adult educators and agencies in RBs and LEAs and the voluntary sector.

As Pioneer Work is an action-research project, research and evaluation are integral to its success. The action-research framework aims to continuously evaluate and monitor an ongoing programme in order that the action can be improved. Methods used for evaluation should be beneficial to all those involved. The research component is an 'integral part of the totality of educational experiences stimulated by the Project . . . seen as a continuing dialogue over time, rather than as an external evaluation of specific action programmes.'[1]

This research project is only one stage in the continuous experimental process of Pioneer Work. Thus the methodology has to be seen in the context of action research. Any research method used must be able to fit into the developmental work of the Project. Moreover, as the research and the action are wholly interdependent, the research must be able to 'adapt itself to the programme environment and disrupt operations as little as possible'.[2]

2.2 Methods

In order to gain a clearer insight into the perceptions of students and tutors involved in the Project's course programme, user and tutor surveys were carried out. It was only after extensive piloting that the final decision on research methods was taken. Discussion on methods was focused on the relative importance of qualitative and quantitative information.[3] The Project piloted the method of individual discussion-based interviews. It was found that although extremely useful information could be elicited using this method, it did have its drawbacks.

- It was very time-consuming, both in terms of interviewing and analysing the data.
- The data proved difficult to collate or quantify, and therefore the method was less useful when interviewing large numbers.
- Making generalisations from such a wide range of responses proved problematic.

This interview technique was used with the relatively small tutors' sample. With the students, on the other hand, it was decided that the resources were not available to implement this method effectively. A certain amount of quantification was felt to be useful in order that comparisons could be made between different approaches and categories, and between students of different ages, educational backgrounds, gender, etc.

Thus, the student schedule was semi-structured, using both open and closed questions. Examples of these are:

Open question: How would you describe the tutor's teaching style?
Closed question: Would you say that the tutor's teaching style was formal or informal?

Not only were the responses to closed questions quantified, but where possible answers from open questions were also categorised so that quantification could take place.

Traditional survey methods were used for student interviews in order to gain some standardisation. However, these methods were used flexibly so that:

(a) the research could truly respond to the action
(b) the students would be encouraged to participate in the development of the research (see 2.6).

Other more informal interview methods were also used in the research. These included in-depth individual discussions, group discussions and participant observation. Before interviewing students individually, the interviewers would often become temporary participants in courses. Apart from being a very important method of evaluation, participation proved useful in removing barriers between those being researched and the researcher.

2.3 Piloting

Altogether, four different interview schedules were piloted. Various problems arose during this stage of the research.

- The content of the research. Initial drafts of the student schedule included a section on socio-psychological aspects of unemployment. These questions were rejected as having been the focal point of research elsewhere.
- A lengthy interview with a series of complex questions can prove to be an intimidating experience for students. To make sure of successful participation, it was important that schedules were not too long and that students could always understand why the questions were being asked.
- The problem associated with asking theoretical questions raises the most significant reason for extensive piloting and revision: the barrier of language. This research probes topics which participants may not previously have thought about in detail (teaching methods or teaching styles, course content and curriculum design, for example). Technical language was not used by the interviewers, but in spite of extensive rewording and reordering of questions, paraphrasing still proved necessary during interviews.

The tutors' schedules did not need such extensive piloting, although changes were made in terms of length, language and subject area. Initial drafts included far more technically phrased questions relating to teaching methods, course planning and educational philosophy than was the case in the final version.

2.4 Content of Interview Schedules

A schedule for the student survey was designed which included questions in the following areas: students' changing educational and vocational expectations; their previous educational and adult education background; barriers to access (including transport, childcare); assessment of courses in terms of content and approach; social aspects of courses; discussion of teaching methods; the significance, if any, of courses to students' lives; and the influence of liberal education.

The topics included in the tutor schedule were: course content; teaching methodology; curriculum planning; teaching philosophy; analysis of progress and outcomes for students and courses; level of support and tutors; tutors' attitudes to working for a university department; counselling; the demands of informal teaching; and tutors' educational and vocational backgrounds.

2.5 Sampling

As classes run throughout the year with Pioneer Work responding to demand, it was decided to take sixteen courses (selected from the various approaches) which were running in spring and summer 1985 to form the basis of the research.

Since Pioneer Work classes have no compulsory prior registration, a student sample could not be selected beforehand. Moreover, students may 'drop out', attend intermittently, or join the course late. Because of lack of resources to interview 'drop outs', only those who had attended two-thirds or more of the course meetings were included in the sample. The sample was drawn when courses were either near completion or when they had been running for more than eight weeks. Most Pioneer Work courses are between eight and ten weeks in duration, though some are longer. Thus, some courses sampled had been running for a much shorter period than others.

A proportionate sample of two-thirds of each course was drawn from class registers. Course enrolments are not uniform and therefore the sample does not have the same number from each class. The sample gives a true representation of the population at the time of interviewing in terms of age, gender and unemployed status. Between 75 and 80% of the population was interviewed. In effect, 76 students took part in the research. Changing perceptions of needs have meant that there are now more women-only courses than was the case in 1983. This means that there is an imbalance of women in the sample.

The project is seeking ways in which its resources can be made accessible and available to the Black communities. Seventeen percent of the sample consisted of Black students. (In this report, the term 'Black' refers to students of Afro-Caribbean and Asian descent.)

A total of fifteen tutors took part in the research (two of these were team-teaching on the same course). A further two tutors were not available for interview. For one course (Opportunities for Women) where there was a panel of tutors, only the co-ordinating tutor was interviewed.

Two interviewers implemented the student questionnaire.[4] The tutor interviews were conducted by the researcher. Interviews took place in a relaxed and friendly fashion, but questions were asked in a fixed order and a degree of standardisation was achieved.

2.6 A Two-Way Process

One aim of the research was that students and tutors would benefit from the research process itself. It is hoped from the interviews both students and tutors gained an insight into the structure and purpose of Pioneer Work, and that they came to realise how important their views are to future course planning. Moreover, discussion of courses with participants can be a helpful way for them to reflect upon the course they have attended and assess how the experience has affected them.

Wherever possible, the interviewer used the opportunity to give general or educational advice and information. One woman who was not registered as unemployed subsequently 'signed on' in order to take advantage of concessions for adult education courses. Some others started going to new courses as a direct result of the interview. The tutor interviews gave tutors the opportunity to 'sound off' about the lack of resources, support, money and the plight of 'part-timers' in general.

Pioneer Work is aware that the research has sampling shortcomings. Among these are:

- As noted above, students who 'dropped out' or were irregular attenders were not interviewed. Thus, the views recorded in the research are those of people who enjoyed the courses enough to become regular participants. It would certainly be very interesting to learn why people stopped attending, and some tutors did follow up non-attenders, but lack of resources prevented this being done systematically. It must be borne in mind that the sample is made up of regular attenders, and that their feedback is likely to be more positive than would be the case had *all* those attending the courses been included in the sample.

- Courses sampled are not of a uniform length and some students, and tutors, are going to have far more knowledge of their course and its subject matter than others. The quality of responses in the interviews relates directly to the length of time the courses have been running. The content of the report does at times reflect this imbalance, with quotations and examples varying greatly according to the experience of tutors and students (although responses from students and tutors would still vary enormously irrespective of course length).

2.7 Summary

This chapter has examined the aims and objectives of the research and the methodology used. Pioneer Work is an action-research project where the research and action are wholly interdependent. The research methods used must be flexible and adaptable in order to fit into the developmental nature of the work of the Project.

The aim of the research is to gain a clearer insight into the perceptions of students and tutors involved in the Project's course programme. In order to do this, user and tutor surveys were carried out. Sixteen courses were sampled in the spring and early summer of 1985. A total of 76 students were interviewed, in addition to fifteen tutors.

The research became part of the educational process of Pioneer Work, giving both students and tutors the opportunity to assess their experience of a course. Moreover, wherever possible, interviewers would impart additional information and advice.

The research does not include people who left the courses and, therefore, the student sample contains people who are more likely to have had a positive experience of the course. The quality of responses from interviewees depends to a certain extent on the length of time courses have been running. These points should be taken into account when the results of the research are being considered.

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4. Roger Higginbottom, Bradford, and Lindsey Fraser, Leeds.

3

Students' Social Characteristics

Before analysing details of the courses and their outcomes, it is necessary to provide a baseline of information from the interviews about the social and economic circumstances of the students. This is based on both quantitative (the number of students who were registered unemployed, etc.) and qualitative (students' views about previous educational experiences) responses.

3.1 Age, Gender and Employment History of Students

The population surveyed consisted of 76 people, 30 men and 46 women (the reason for the gender imbalance is explained in Chapter 2). People of all age-groups attended courses, with the 26-35-year-old category being the largest (see Table 2) and the under-25s providing 25% of the respondents. Nevertheless, 26% of students interviewed were aged 46 and over. This is a very encouraging statistic, as Pioneer Work experience shows that this is a difficult age-group to attract. In 1983 only 16% of Pioneer Work students were in this age-bracket.[1] The older unemployed are an important target–group for informal day-time courses: they may have more trouble coping with unemployment after being in work for a longer period; they are less likely to find paid employment, especially if semi- or unskilled; and they are more likely to feel stigmatised by unemployment.[2]

Table 2. *Age of students*

	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
16–25	9	19.6	10	33.3	19	25.0
26–35	19	41.3	7	23.3	26	34.2
36–45	7	15.2	4	13.3	11	14.5
46+	11	23.9	9	29.9	20	26.3
Total	**46**	**60.5**	**30**	**39.5**	**76**	**100**

Table 3. *Registered unemployed*

	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Yes	18	39.1	23	76.7	41	53.9
No	28	60.9	7	23.3	35	46.1
Total	**46**	**60.5**	**30**	**39.5**	**76**	**100**

Fifty-four percent of the sample were registered as unemployed; over 75% of the men compared to less than 40% of the women. Of these men who were not 'signing on', one was retired, others were claiming sickness benefit, and one man had been told that he was not entitled to benefit because of his redundancy pay.

Over 70% of the women who were not registered as unemployed were either receiving a long-term benefit such as the one-parent family allowance, a widow's pension, or their husbands/partners were claiming benefit for them. Very few of the women were being financially supported by waged partners. Although child-care, family-care and household duties were reasons given for women not registering for work, a substantial number (78.3%) were looking for employment, either when interviewed or in the near future. This indicates that many more women than is currently acknowledged either need or wish to secure employment. Seventy percent of the men were seeking work at present or in the future.

3.2 Long-Term Unemployment

The long-term unemployed are a very difficult section of the population to attract to adult education. Their special concerns – such as apathy, mental and physical health problems, and alienation – have been well documented.[3]

Part of Pioneer Work's policy is to attract the long-term unemployed/unwaged to its courses. A substantial number of people interviewed had been unemployed/unwaged for an extended period. In response to the question 'How long have you been unemployed/unwaged?', 43% had not worked for two years or more and 32% of students had not had paid employment for over five years. Many of these long-term unemployed are women who have stopped work to look after the children or a sick, disabled or elderly relative. Women such as these are often not viewed as the 'real' long-term unemployed, but in-depth discussions with students revealed that many of the women had indeed been looking for paid employment for some time. A number of others stated that had provision been made to care for their dependents, they would definitely have been 'in the job market'. Long-term unemployment is often viewed as a problem specifically related to men. The true statistics on women's unemployment remain hidden, whilst their chances of permanent full-time work decline.[4]

One study of the impact of unemployment states 'The growth of the service sector and the shortening of the working week . . . might reasonably be supposed to have improved women's employment prospects, but since the mid-70s this has not been the case. Women's unemployment rose much faster than that of men, increasing seven-fold in comparison with a doubling of the rate among men.'[5]

The number of men who had been unemployed for over two years was 50%. Some had been out of work much longer, and eight others had not worked at all – two of these were over 25. The only type of work experience any of these eight people had had since leaving school was YOP schemes.

People were asked whether they had been unemployed before their last job. Many students had been through intermittent periods of unemployment. Over half of those who had worked at some time or another had been unemployed before their last job. Evidence extracted from the interviews and discussions with students reveals that at least one-third of the students had bouts of unemployment throughout their working lives.

Table 4. *Length of unemployment before last job*

	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
More than 3, less than 6 mths	1	5.0	3	20.0	4	11.4
More than 6 mths, less than 1 yr	10	50.0	2	13.3	12	34.3
More than 1, less than 2 yrs	4	20.0	2	13.3	6	17.1
More than 2, less than 5 yrs	5	25.0	8	53.4	13	37.1
Total	**20**	**57.1**	**15**	**42.9**	**35**	**100**

Note: 41 people not previously unemployed or who had never worked are not counted in this table.

3.3 Occupation

Students' previous employment was classified as accurately as possible by the Classification of Occupations 1980 (HMSO). Table 5 gives a breakdown of students' last jobs. Eight people had no experience of paid employment.

Table 5. *Last paid employment*

	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
I/II Managerial/ professional	1	2.4	3	11.1	4	5.9
IIIa Non-manual	8	19.5	2	7.4	10	14.7
IIIb Manual skilled	3	7.3	1	3.7	4	5.9
IV Manual semiskilled	11	26.9	8	29.6	19	27.9
V Manual unskilled	18	43.9	13	48.1	31	45.6
Total	**41**	**60.3**	**27**	**39.7**	**68**	**100**

Most people were in semi- and unskilled occupations. Below is a sample of the types of employment undertaken:

Female	**Male**
factory packer	warehouseman
catering assistant	road sweeper
typist	gardener
hairdresser	personnel officer
machinist	bus conductor
cleaner	labourer
receptionist	refuse collector
office worker	painter/decorator
youth worker	livery stable worker
	bailing machine operator
	milkman

The above sample shows that there is more variety in male occupations than female. This correlates closely with national statistics, which show that the majority of women are employed in ten occupations including clerical work, service staff, shop assistants and retail and textile operatives.[6]

Forty-eight and a half percent of people stated that their last job was not their usual occupation, and indeed 30% of these said that they did not have a particular occupation. The rest cited mainly unskilled and semi-skilled work as their usual type of employment. It is interesting to note that 81% of people who had been employed intermittently in unskilled work had also been out of work for over two years or more. People in unskilled, low paid jobs are most vulnerable to repeated unemployment. Adrian Sinfield discusses repeated unemployment in *What Unemployment Means*. He shows that people in lower socio-economic groups are far more likely to have long periods of unemployment and bouts of intermittent unemployment.[7]

Respondents were asked why they had left their job. Various reasons were given; redundancy (13.2%), the sack (9.21%), health (10.5%), gave up voluntarily (51.3%). The last refers to many women who gave up work to have children or to look after dependents. Twenty percent of the men gave up work of their own accord, citing poor wages, bad working conditions and tedium as reasons.[8] Different reasons for leaving work voluntarily seem to indicate that internal circumstances, such as work conditions, pressurise men to give up their jobs, whereas external pressures, such as child-care, are more likely to force women to leave. The number of people who gave up work voluntarily bears no relation to those students who say they do not want to work. The improvement of child-care, family support and working conditions would have definitely reduced the numbers of those leaving employment. Six people had to leave for health reasons. Some had been chronically sick due to working conditions and said that they could never work again, whilst others were actively seeking employment.

Compared to other studies of the unemployed, fewer people in this sample were made redundant. This relates to local factors. Leeds and Bradford have no large-scale industry, but a mix of industrial and commercial bases. Major redundancies, as pointed out in Chapter 1, occurred in the 1970s rather than more recently.

3.4 Previous Educational Experience

Educational background, especially school experiences, is often thought to affect attitudes to adult education.[9] Negative feelings about school or lack of academic success can provide barriers to learning later on in life. Students were asked to categorise their satisfaction with school education on a five-point scale, from 'Very satisfactory' to 'Very dissatisfactory', in Table 6.

Table 6. *Satisfaction with school education*

	All		Female		Male	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Very satisfactory	7	9	6	13	1	3
Satisfactory	25	33	17	37	8	27
Neither satisfactory nor dissatisfactory	7	9	1	2	6	20
Dissatisfactory	18	24	11	24	8	23
Very dissatisfactory	19	25	11	24	8	27
Total	**76**	**100**	**46**	**60.5**	**30**	**39.5**

In the context of the assumptions outlined above, it is surprising that more than 40% were satisfied or very satisfied with their school experience. It should be noted, however, that many detailed negative comments were provided by both 'satisfied' and 'dissatisfied' students. Some representative comments were:

> *'Liked school – couldn't take part as much as I would have liked because of family problems.'*
>
> *'Had no interest, it wasn't relevant, didn't help me to get a job, I felt I wanted to learn but wasn't pushed.'*
>
> *'Teachers were only interested in kids who were intelligent, if you were a bit slow you were pushed to the back of the class.'*
>
> *'Liked school but I didn't do very well – I don't know whether that was my fault or the teachers', I don't think I was very interested in education at the time.'*
>
> *'During war – discipline tough, it taught you a lot of respect for elderly people but didn't get a lot of education.'*
>
> *'Teachers were keener than now, I liked school but didn't get a good education.'*
>
> *'It was fun but didn't help get a job – if you weren't going to get qualifications then the teachers didn't bother.'*
>
> *'Moved to a lot of different schools because my family moved around a lot.'*
>
> *'Didn't like school in England, liked it in Pakistan where we were in single-sex schools and I was familiar with the language and culture, here problems of language, boys and racial prejudice.'*
>
> *'Often ill, didn't give me any start in life but if you were good at subjects you could do well.'*

Many people thought that the opportunities were available for a good education, but for a multitude of reasons (the war, health, family mobility, family problems, lack of motivation, dyslexia, etc.), many of the respondents felt that they had not benefited from their school education. A number of people seemed to have had a disrupted school life. Students who said that they had benefited from their formal education gave reasons such as liking certain subjects and particular teachers. People with academic qualifications (Table 7) believed that they had benefited from the school system. However, the level of satisfaction bears no relationship to formal qualifications attained. Those with some qualifications were just as likely to feel dissatisfied with their school education as those with no qualifications.

Those who stated that they had not benefited from school said that subjects were irrelevant, that they did not lead to jobs, that the school atmosphere was not conducive to learning, and quite a few people felt that they had not been 'pushed' enough. It is obvious that a number of students regretted what they now saw as missed opportunities, and men under 35 were most likely to admit to having spent their time at school 'fooling around'.

People's views about education seemed to differ according to age. Many people over 45 felt that education was better in their day than it is now. They felt that today discipline was lacking, children were not learning the '3 Rs' and that the quality of both teachers and teaching had declined. On the other hand, 35-year-olds and under were more likely to talk about the fact that school had not helped them gain employment, the ineptitude of the school careers service, and the school's inability to prepare them for life.

Adult educators often assume that people's previous educational experiences can have a detrimental effect on their motivation to pursue further educational opportunities. In this study, quantitative and qualitative information reveals that many people have some positive memories of their schooling. The comments indicate that some participants with positive views about school liked the social but not necessarily the educational aspects. It could be argued, therefore, that people with 'disadvantaged' backgrounds will not automatically have thoroughly negative views about their school experiences. Other factors may be more relevant in deterring people from further or adult education: these could be immediate and specific (lack of information, child-care problems) or more general underlying factors ('It's not for the likes of me').

Of students in the sample, 82.9% had left school at the legal minimum age, whether that be 14, 15 or 16, 92.1% had no experience of university or polytechnic, and over 61% had no formal qualifications whatsoever. These figures, which confirm earlier findings, show that Pioneer Work has continued to attract its target of disadvantaged people with previously very limited educational experience.

Table 7. *Qualifications*

	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
No qualifications	30	65.2	17	56.7	47	61.8
CSEs	5	10.9	1	3.3	6	7.9
A and O levels	3	6.5	7	23.3	10	13.2
Degrees/Diplomas/ HNC (univ/poly)	4	8.7	2	6.7	6	7.9
Craft certs, City & Guilds, secretarial	4	8.7	3	10	7	9.2
Total	**46**	**60.5**	**30**	**39.5**	**76**	**100**

A greater percentage of women than men had no qualifications – men were more likely to have O and A-levels than women, but out of the six people with university/polytechnic education, four were women. It is interesting to note that only three of these people with higher education had employment which required their qualifications; the rest had been involved in unskilled manual work. Two of those leaving school at the minimum age with no qualifications had occupations in RG category II. Although there is usually a correlation between qualifications and occupations, even the small numbers referred to above show that this is not always the case.

Students were also asked about their previous adult education experience. Sixty-three percent of people had attended some kind of post-school vocational or educational course. Of these, 25% had attended general adult education (mainly recreational and leisure classes) and 33% had participated in government training schemes. Others had been involved in adult basic education or vocational training (secretarial and craft certificates).

Given the dramatic increase in government training schemes in recent years and the wider availability of adult basic education (whether in traditional adult education settings or in drop-in-centres) the figure of 63% with some previous adult vocational or educational experience is not surprising.

People who had attended basic education classes were satisfied, on the whole, with the attention that they were receiving on these courses. On the other hand, derogatory comments regarding the nature of previous course experience were made by those who had attended vocational courses.

The overall impression confirmed the experience of many educators: adults enjoy and benefit from informal learning experiences far more than formal learning settings.

A selection of comments follows from people who had previously attended different types of courses:

> *'The syllabus was just like school.'*
>
> *'Both my ESL classes and this one are relaxed and friendly.'*
>
> *'In the class that I did before, you were just told what to do; in this course you sit and speak to people – you get more information that way – doing it for yourself and then passing it on to other people.'*
>
> *'In the TOPS scheme, we didn't understand what we were being taught, the teaching was abysmal, other courses were much stricter.'*
>
> *'Far more formal – lecturing rather than discussion.'*
>
> *'Teaching before, more to you as an individual, this is more working as a group.'*
>
> *'The literacy centre is very friendly, with lovely teachers.'*

A variety of reasons for not attending courses in the past were given. Forty-six percent stated that they had not known of their existence. Previous employment and lack of time were among other reasons given. Only two students said that they had not been involved in adult education before because of 'bad school experiences'.

A minority of students (9%) had previously attended a course on the subject they were currently studying (music, art or new technology). Comparing their previous experience with these courses, this minority commented as follows:

> *'This one is less formal and more oriented towards different styles of art.'*
>
> *'Here, you don't have to be a good artist but what you do is appreciated.'*
>
> *'The computer YOPS course was not helpful at all.'*

People who had not attended a similar course before said that they had not heard of such a course previously (54%), or had been working (15%).

Others had either no time, or had not been interested in the subject before.

3.5 Other Possible Barriers to Access

Children. Sixty-five and a half percent of students had children. These students were asked if this had prevented them from attending courses in the past – over half of them, all women, said it had.

> *'They prevented me from getting out; I was stuck.'*
>
> *'I've been dying to get out of the house and do different courses, but I feel very constrained.'*
>
> *'I want to be with my child while she is young.'*

It is of course necessary to provide suitable facilities if looking after children is not to be a major barrier to educational opportunities. All the women with children under five attended courses which offered child-care provision. When asked if such provision was needed, 90% of the students thought that child-care facilities are important and should be on offer in courses for the unemployed.

Other family. Caring for other members of the family can prevent people from attending courses. Students cited sick/invalid partners, aged parents, and disabled relatives as reasons why educational and recreational activities were curtailed.

Travel. Courses monitored in the research were in a variety of venues: some in the community, others in the city centre, and the rest in various institutions. Table 8 shows that men are far more likely to travel longer distances than women. This can be an important factor when planning the location of classes.

Table 8. *Travel to courses*

Miles	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Under 0.5	20	43.5	4	13.3	24	31.6
0.5–1	8	17.4	2	6.7	10	13.2
1+	5	10.9	4	13.3	9	11.8
2+	2	4.3	7	23.3	9	11.8
3+	7	15.2	8	26.7	15	19.7
4+	2	4.3	1	3.3	3	3.9
5–10	2	4.4	4	13.3	6	7.9
Total	**46**	**60.5**	**30**	**39.5**	**76**	**100**

Most of the students walked to class, others took the bus, and only a few came by car. When people were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to attend courses, 60.9% of women were only prepared to travel under two miles, whilst 63.6% of men would travel three miles or more. This picture of mobility reveals the restrictions on women who are unable to leave their immediate vicinity because of child-care and household commitments, but would do so if the opportunities were available.

People often said that length and mode of travel depended on finance. Students who would consider travelling out of their locality depend on 'off-peak' fares (West Yorkshire has a blanket 30p fare for restricted periods). Courses arranged in the city centre are timed to coincide with 'off-peak' travel. If students are going to travel to courses, then cheap travel is essential.

Adult educators are generally well aware of the difficulties involved in reaching certain sectors of the population. The problem is critical in Pioneer Work, as it is in the nature of the Project to target groups which do not normally become involved in adult education.[10] Therefore, one aim of the research was to determine how people who did attend courses had become aware of their existence.

Students were asked how they had learnt about the course and 65% said 'by word of mouth' (77% of participants via the community approaches had learnt of the course this way). This included learning about the course from a variety of people: friends, relatives, community workers, basic education teachers, workers at unemployed centres, playgroup leaders, etc. Newspapers and leaflets were cited by 12% and 11%

of the sample respectively, and 7% picked up publicity from the library. The local radio was also mentioned, especially by people in a local history class. In one course (Opportunities for Women), all the students had seen the course advertised in the newspaper.

Table 9 shows the students' responses to the question 'Many unemployed people do not come to free courses; why do you think this is so?'

Table 9. *Reasons for not attending courses*

	Female		Male		All	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Don't know	–	–	1	3.3	1	1.3
Child-care	1	2.2	–	–	1	1.3
Their school experience	2	4.3	3	10	5	6.6
Lack of interest	9	19.6	5	16.7	14	18.4
Don't know about them	22	47.8	13	43.4	35	46.1
Lack of confidence	10	21.7	4	13.3	14	18.4
Other	2	4.7	4	13.3	6	7.9
Total	**46**	**60.5**	**30**	**39.5**	**76**	**100**

Nearly half the participants felt that lack of knowledge about courses prevents people attending. Other main reasons given were lack of interest and lack of confidence. Only five people thought that people's school experiences prevented their coming, which is at variance with the views of many adult education professionals. Reasons in the 'other' category included: 'Apathy'; 'Children's upbringing – parents don't stimulate children enough'; 'They think women's groups are full of snobs'; 'Many of the classes are mixed, and Moslem women cannot go to them'.

Here are some further comments:

'They think courses are organised by alien bodies.'

'Older people don't have the confidence, they think they can't do it.'

'They don't take the trouble to get off their backsides.'

'People aren't interested, especially if it doesn't help them to get a job.'

'They may be frightened of meeting other people.'

It is generally recognised by community adult education practitioners that 'word of mouth' is the best form of publicity.[11] In order to reach people, contacting and using key people in the community, whether employed or unwaged, is a necessity. This does not mean that other means of publicity should not be used. Free local advertisers, local radio, and local libraries are very worthwhile ways of communicating. The successful development of 'word of mouth' networks, however, depends crucially on effective strategies, and the resources for these from educational providers.

3.6 Summary

In this section, details have been provided about the age spread of students and their unemployment status. It is significant that more than one quarter were aged 46 or more, given that it is difficult to recruit older unemployed people to adult education.

It is also interesting that the statistics about women's unemployment confirmed the findings of other studies. Many more women than men in this study were not registered unemployed. Although only 39% of women were registered unemployed, 78% were in fact looking for employment either immediately or in the future. Women's unemployment is much more hidden than men's. Eighty-one percent of people who were employed intermittently in unskilled work had also been out of work for two years or more. This confirms national trends which show those in unskilled or low paid jobs are most vulnerable to repeated or long-term unemployment.

The evidence from the study about previous educational experiences surprised the researchers. It had been assumed that school experiences had a major impact on people's willingness to become involved in adult education. In fact more than 40% expressed satisfaction with their school experiences, and only two students said they had not been involved in adult education before because of bad school experiences. It appears that more immediate factors such as lack of information, difficulties with travel and children are much more significant. For example, 46% had not attended previous adult education courses simply because they did not know about them. Fifty percent of those with children had not attended courses in the past because of restrictions in child-care. The difference in mobility between men and women is also significant. Sixty-three percent of men would travel three miles or more to attend a course, but 60% of women would not travel more than two miles.

Sixty-five percent stated that they had heard about their present course 'by word of mouth'. This confirms the view of many practitioners that successful recruitment to community adult education depends on these 'word of mouth' networks rather than on formal publicity alone. This, however, depends on effective outreach strategies and resources for them, which are often lacking in practice.

Overall, it is clear from the sample that Pioneer Work is reaching its target audience of people with previously limited educational experience, with 92.1% who had had no contact with a university or polytechnic, and over 61% with no formal qualifications whatsoever.

References

1. K. Ward *Beyond Tokenism, op. cit.*
2. See V. McGivney and D. Sims *Adult Education and the Challenge of Unemployment.* Open University Press, 1986.
3. See ACACE *Education for Unemployed Adults.* ACACE, 1982; A. H. Charnley *et al. Education for the Adult Unemployed. Some responses.* NIACE, 1985.
4. For more discussion about unemployed women, see A. Cragg and T. Dawson *Unemployed Women: A study of attitudes and experiences.* Department of Employment, Research Paper No. 47, 1984; R. Martin and J. Wallace *Working Women in Recession.* O.U.P., 1984.
5. Susan Ballock *et al. Caring for Unemployed People.* Bedford Square Press, 1985, p 4.
6. See Virginia Novarra *Women's Work, Men's Work.* Marion Boyars, 1980, p 94.
7. A. Sinfield *What Employment Means.* Martin Robertson, 1981, chapter 1.
8. See I. Bryant *The Educational Needs of Long-Term Unemployed Adults.* University of Glasgow, 1982, p 25.
9. *Adults: Their educational experience and needs.* ACACE, 1982, p 40.
10. *Adults: Their educational experience and needs,* ACACE, 1982, p 29.
11. See, for example, McGivney and Sims, *op. cit.*

4

The General Context of Courses and the Expectations of Students

4.1 The General Context of Courses

The courses analysed were all those running at the time of interviewing. Thus there is no balance between subject areas or venues. Courses participating in the research (see list below) are a true representation of the project's 1984–85 programme.

Alternative health (2)
Art
Community issues
Family matters
Local history (2)
Mothers' discussions group
Local music
New technology
New technology for women
Opportunities for women
Psychological aspects of unemployment
Rock 'n' roll
Welfare rights and housing matters
Women and media

In order to analyse the courses more efficiently, the categories and approaches first described in *Beyond Tokenism*[1] are used here.

Categories: Courses are divided into six categories:

A Welfare rights, Social policy and Unemployment-related classes.

B Educational counselling courses and Discussion groups.

C Subject courses.

D Interest courses.

E Courses specifically related to local issues and/or expressed needs.

F Courses specifically aimed at women.

Table 10. *Categories by courses and percentages of students*

Category	No. of courses	No. of students (%)
A	1	5.3
B	1	5.3
C	4	26.3
D	6	36.8
E	1	7.8
F	3	18.5

Some courses could be directed into more than one category; for instance, *Women and media* could be in D and F. However, to avoid double counting, courses have been placed in only one category.

Table 10 shows that the majority of courses were either in the subject or interest group categories. This is in marked contrast with 1983, when welfare rights courses and discussion groups based round the topic of unemployment were far more common.[1] Since 1983, it has been clear that people tend to be more attracted towards courses which are directly relevant to their interests and needs, rather than general, open-ended discussion groups. With welfare rights, it proved more effective for Pioneer Work to organise a longer course aimed at key individuals rather than repeat the previous relatively widespread provision of welfare rights courses.

There has been a growth in courses specifically for women. In 1983 courses in category F were 12% of the Project's output; this has increased to 18.5%, with courses in some other categories also targeted towards women. The specific targeting of women has developed because unwaged women often do not think of themselves as unemployed, and so will not attend places such as unemployed centres.

The subject areas within some of the categories have also changed. For example, the Subject category in 1983 included sociology, politics and psychology. But in 1985 this category had none of these but included instead topics such as new technology and local history. On the other hand, certain courses in the interest category, such as rock 'n' roll and alternative health, are similar. In 1983 there was a clear distinction between subject and interest categories. Subject courses included traditional academic areas, whereas interest courses were more leisure-oriented. There is now much less of a distinction between the two categories, with subject matter overlapping to a large extent.

Overall, more than half the people interviewed attended courses in the subject or interest categories, with the latter being especially popular with men (57%). Women were more widely spread between the various categories. Two of the age-bands seemed to have a preferred category. Sixty-three percent of the 16-25 age group attended courses in the interest category, while 67% of the over-55s were in the subject category. The other age groups seemed reasonably spread throughout the categories.

Approaches: Table 11 below gives a comparison of the courses analysed in the research, broken down into approaches compared to those analysed in 1983.

Table 11. *Approaches by courses and percentage of students*

Approaches	Courses (1985)%	No. of students (1985)%	Courses (1983)%
Community	62.5	46.1	26.0
Institutional	25.0	34.2	34.0
Organisational	12.5	19.7	37.0

The table shows that the community approach was far more prevalent in 1985 than two years earlier. *Beyond Tokenism* revealed that the community approach was more successful at recruiting people who had only basic educational backgrounds, and/or were long-term unemployed. Therefore, efforts were made to locate more courses in a community setting. Another reason for the sharp increase in community approach courses is that Pioneer Work staff have succeeded in building up the contacts and networks in certain localities in Leeds and Bradford which are crucial for the success of such courses. Links and networks develop over a period of time, and the longer Pioneer Work has gone on, the greater the number of contacts and in-depth knowledge of different localities.

Finally, with the project targeting women's courses, it has been discovered that they are more likely to attend courses in their own locality, for reasons such as convenience of travel (see 3.5).

Courses take place in a variety of settings in the community: community centres, community nurseries, churches, local health clinics and community flats. There has been a continuing emphasis on experimenting with venues which are not usually identified with education, and also places where people may congregate for other reasons, such as the nursery.

Although fewer classes than previously are now organised in the institutional setting, they still represent a significant proportion (25%) of the programme. This is the result partly of the continuing close relationship with the LEA, and partly because of the establishment of new links with other agencies. Courses have not been located in traditional adult education settings, but in a 'drop-in' day educational centre for ex-offenders and homeless people, women's skill centres, and in a library. Experimentation with different venues is part of the attempt to attract new people.

The organisational approach in the research amounts to 12.5% of Pioneer Work's total provision. The venues in this approach tend to be unemployed centres. During 1983–84 Pioneer Work injected a substantial amount of course hours into the Leeds Trades Council Unemployed Centre. Many of these courses were then successfully handed over to the LEA, which now, with a short-term NIACE project, has made funding available for educational provision, and therefore Pioneer Work has decreased its input.

Courses which attract only women, whether advertised in this way or not, tend to be organised via the community approach. However, mixed gender courses in this approach are also likely to be attended largely by women. In fact, 63% of the women interviewed were attending classes in the community approach, compared to 28% in the institutional and 9% in the organisational. On the other hand, men are as likely to participate in courses in the organisational approach as the institutional approach.

The research did not find such a contrast between the approaches and people's educational backgrounds as *Beyond Tokenism* did. This is probably because much more careful targeting has been possible as Pioneer Work has become more established. Because there is a greater proportion of women in the community approach, it is not too surprising that a large number were not registered as unemployed; nor that many (43%) had been unemployed for over five years, compared to 27% in the institutional and 13% in the organisational approach.

It is interesting to note that the age groups in the approaches show one major change from the results in *Beyond Tokenism*. Fifty-three percent of people attending courses via the community approach were aged 45-plus, whereas in 1983 there were only 5%. This is probably because

Pioneer Work has continued to work and support one particular community centre which is now regularly used by older as well as younger people.

After these details about the students and an overview of the type of courses which they attended, it is necessary to ask *why* they came initially. What were their expectations?

4.2 Expectations

Steps have been taken to make adult education more accessible to the unemployed/unwaged sections of society, but the vast majority of people do not attend courses.

Students in the research were asked why they came to courses. The responses of 43% of the sample were categorised broadly as 'out of interest'. This included such comments as:

> *'Several others from the tenants' association said that they found it interesting in the past so I thought that I'd join and see what it was like.'*
>
> *'A friend was coming so I came with her to see what was going on – I come here all the time – it sounded interesting. I had nothing else to do on a Tuesday morning.'*
>
> *'I felt it was high time that I broadened my horizons.'*
>
> *'I thought it would be nice to learn something that I didn't know anything about before.'*

A number of people (36%), including all those studying *New technology*, had attended to gain specific information:

> *'I wanted to learn about computing with a view to getting a job.'*
>
> *'I wanted to learn about computing to help my daughter.'*
>
> *'I felt very inadequate about things to do with computers and new technology.'*

One woman from a women's group said that she came with a very specific problem; she was having difficulties with her teenage children and she thought that she might gain some insight into how best to deal with them. Another woman from the *Community issues* group commented 'I thought that the course would help us with our local housing exhibition – we would be able to find out how and where to get the materials and resources we needed.' Some women came to the courses in order to get away from the house:

> *'I'm very isolated at home, I don't see a lot of people, I wanted to sit down together with other women.'*
>
> *'I've no friends where I live, nobody of the same age-group.'*
>
> *'It's a release from the house, a chance to socialise and get children acquainted with other children.'*

Other people had come just to help fill in the time:

> *'On that particular day I've nothing else to do.'*
>
> *'It's a nice way to spend a morning.'*

Tutors were asked why they thought people had attended their course. They gave reasons which were very similar to those of their students. Social reasons, some felt, were a factor; a few tutors felt that they were providing a facility that people had asked for:

> *'Women had asked for such a course, they defined the content, so they were genuinely interested. They saw it as being of practical use in their lives. The content of the course had already been discussed and it was related to the needs of the area.'*

Many tutors felt that people were attending their course for different reasons. One *New technology* tutor stated:

> *'Their reasons are mixed: some come for social purposes, others want to learn out of interest or for the sake of their children or because they are trying to get a job.'*

A *Local history* tutor commented:

> *'They all want to know about the history of the area but some are more interested in the social aspects of the course than others. Some are very keen to do a project.'*

The *Opportunities for women* tutor said:

> *'The women had come because they had all reached critical stages in their lives, such as children starting or leaving school, children leaving home,*

> *marriage break-up or death of a partner. The women, then, were wondering what changes to make in their lives.'*

Comparison between the students' and tutors' comments reveal that tutors' perceptions of their students were fairly accurate. A tutor who has ascertained the reasons for attendance is likely to make a more informed judgement as to the needs of the students, their awareness of the subject matter, their level of motivation and therefore the types of methods and materials that should be used.

It has been shown that students attend Pioneer Work courses for a number of reasons, some of which can be interpreted broadly as educational. Others attend primarily for social reasons. Given the diversity of students' reasons for attending, considerable skill is required from the tutors to develop a group identity in classes, while at the same time allowing each student to feel that something tangible has been achieved from a course.

4.3 Expectations in Terms of Jobs or Qualifications

The courses, it seems, were not viewed by most people as a means of gaining either employment or qualifications. Even though 75% of the students were looking for jobs immediately or in the near future, only 18% stated that they thought the course might help them get a job. Included in those who thought that the course might lead to a job were some young men from the music courses:

> *'This course might help me get a job in a record shop.'*

> *'I would like to play for a living and the help that I've got on this course might help.'*

Some students from the *New technology* courses were also hopeful that the course could help them obtain employment:

> *'This course has taught me about various computing systems – that should help me in search of work.'*

> *'My husband is now going to give me some work.'*

> *'When you go for a job, you can say you've done computing.'*

One person in another course said:

> *'I've got more self-confidence as a result of coming to the course and that helped me get a part-time job.'*

The following are some reasons given by those who did not think that the course would help them find a job:

> *'It's an interest, it won't get me work.'*
>
> *'I'm too old.'*
>
> *'I don't see how the course can assist me in getting a job – there's not enough information.'*
>
> *'I'm a single parent so I won't be looking for a job for a long time.'*
>
> *'Why should it help me, I didn't come here looking for a job.'*
>
> *'I've come out of interest, not to get a job.'*

Twenty-nine percent of students thought that they might go on to qualification-based courses after attending the Pioneer Work course. The majority of people attending the *New technology* and *Opportunities for women* courses believed that the course could lead on to a qualification. This also applied to some students doing *Art* and *Alternative health.*

> *'I've already started a correspondence course. I also want to do a City and Guilds in computer programming.'*
>
> *'I have learnt a lot in computing so I now feel I could go on to something more advanced.'*
>
> *'I might think about art college to do fine art.'*
>
> *'It (computing) could help me get onto a City and Guilds Certificate.'*
>
> *'I'd like to do something with health care.'*

People from the *Opportunities for women* course talked about taking O-and A-levels especially in English and maths; in addition some wished to attend the drop-in education workshops at the local college.

Many students over 50 years old seemed automatically to think that they were too old either to look for a job connected with the course or to gain any qualifications:

> *'Not me, but it could help other people, they could get a qualification.'*
>
> *'I'm too old, but it could help younger ones to get a job.'*
>
> *'A younger person could go on to a more advanced class but it could help you to get a community work qualification.'*
>
> *'It could help others, it has taught me a lot of things.'*

Nor surprisingly, the more vocationally-oriented subjects were seen as possibly leading to jobs or access qualifications. The *Opportunities for women* course was thought by many of its participants to be a first step to further educational opportunities. The computing courses were also seen as likely to be helpful in securing either employment or qualifications.

However, although some people definitely thought that their course could assist in their employment prospects, only one man had stated this was the reason he had attended the course in the first place. Qualifications and employment are not, in the main, reasons why people do Pioneer Work courses, but, perhaps during the courses, some may find out about opportunities open to them which will allow them to make more choices about their vocational future. These findings about the expectations of students are extremely important when examined in a broader context. The ACACE report of 1982[2] provided substantial evidence of unmet demand for education. Nearly half the respondents in one survey (46%) stated that they would take a course if they were starting adult life again; 61% stated that they would now like to learn about subjects or interests rather than a job; only 15% stated that they would like to follow a work-related course. ACACE commented 'This evidence is important and does much to substantiate the contention that there is a large pool of latent demand' (*op. cit.* p 68). More specifically, it also substantiates the contention that there is much unmet demand for non-vocational and non-qualification-based educational courses.

Since the publication of the ACACE report, long-term structural unemployment has increased dramatically. In this context, it could well have been hypothesised that there would now be a great demand for work-related and vocationally-oriented courses generally, with the implication that there would not be the demand for non-vocational courses. In fact, the results from the research do not support this hypothesis, and correlate quite closely to the ACACE report results, in spite of the differing class and employment composition of the two samples. Seventy-nine percent of respondents in this research attended non-qualification, non-vocationally-oriented courses out of interest or for specific information. In spite of the fact that 75% were actively seeking employment, only 18% stated that they thought the course might help them get a job – and one of these expressed dissatisfaction about this. Overall, the results from this research indicate clearly that people do want more than purely vocational courses, and that liberal adult education and non-vocational courses are meeting a real need and demand.

Most students (80%) had given very little thought to the structure and content of Pioneer Work's courses before attending, including those with other adult education experience. Of the few who had any prior idea of the nature of the course, some thought that they were going to gain information that would be beneficial to their lives; others considered that the course was the same as their expectations of it (including those who had asked for the course in the first place). Some people expected a more traditional educational approach:

> *'I thought there was going to be more theory, I didn't expect so much practical work and discussion.'*
>
> *'I had a misconception about the course, I thought it would be more theoretical than it is. I thought there would be more lecturing.'*

In fact, of those who had expected the course to be other than it was, only one claimed to be disappointed with the actual teaching approach. One man attended a local history class under the impression he was there to see an exhibition.

> *'I was under the impression that it was an exhibition about old Leeds but when I found out it was a discussion group I found it very interesting.'*

At the time of writing, he continues to attend the course – now funded by the LEA. Very few people, therefore, came along to the courses with preconceptions. While it may be problematic to a tutor when trying to negotiate curriculum if people have not given much thought to what they wish to do, it does indicate the importance of a negotiated curriculum throughout a course; this issue is referred to in a later section.

Students, then, do not attend courses with detailed preconceptions. They are, however, willing to attend for reasons other than gaining help with employment or training. Overall, they mainly have general educational reasons for attending (developing an interest and gaining information), combined with social reasons. Before examining in a later section whether the courses fulfilled these expectations, it is necessary to analyse how these courses were organised.

References

1. K. Ward and R. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p 74.
2. *Continuing Education: From policies to practice.* ACACE, 1982.

5

Pre-Course Planning and Inter-Agency Collaboration

The 1982 ACACE report identified a range of barriers to access for adults: dispositional (related to attitude and self-perception as an adult learner), institutional (practices and procedures which discourage adults from taking part in education) and situational (arising from the adult's situation in life at a given time).[1]

Even if these barriers are overcome there are additional, external barriers to access which Pioneer Work has identified. For example, in 1985–86, attendance at some Pioneer Work courses was affected during the winter by extremely bad weather; the teachers' industrial action had a serious effect on the freedom of unemployed individuals (particularly women, but also a significant number of men who are now responsible for child-care) to attend day-time courses.

In order for a community-based course to succeed, all these factors have to be taken into account as part of an essential process of detailed pre-course planning.

5.1 The Meaning of Inter-Agency Collaboration

Given the generally recognised diversity of needs and wants amongst unemployed people, and the scarce resources currently available in any sector of adult education for community-based provision with unemployed people, inter-agency collaboration is essential. This must be defined in the broadest sense, to include not just collaboration between formal or statutory adult education agencies, but also collaboration between these and other non-educational agencies (such as social services, leisure services, etc.), and also, perhaps even more importantly, collaboration between educational providers and voluntary organisations. These may be broadly-based (such as MIND), or may be neighbourhood-based (a local church, or an informal group such as a tenants' association). This broad-based collaboration is essential if scarce resources are to be maximised and overlap and duplication avoided.

In practice, Pioneer Work had no option but to develop extensive and broad-based collaborative strategies. All the courses are situated off the university campus. Apart from the issues of principle, therefore, Pioneer Work had a practical dependency on other groups and agencies for meeting places, assistance with outreach, and other factors necessary for successful course development. As the use of approaches has revealed, collaboration with other agencies and groups is the norm. This involves relationships with both the voluntary and statutory sector as the following list illustrates:

Voluntary

Independent community centres
Charities (MIND)
TUC centres
Churches
Community groups
Independent drop-in centres
Local community groups

Statutory or formal agencies

LEA adult education centres
Social services (nurseries)
Probation service
Leisure services (libraries)
Colleges

How do courses develop initially? They originate in three possibly overlapping ways (see Table 12).

1. *Self-determined or group determined.* A group of unemployed people or a local community group have an idea for a course or activity for themselves in their area.
2. *Educational agency initiated.* A formal educational provider such as the LEA, the WEA, or, as in some cases here, Pioneer Work has an idea for a course.
3. *Non-educational agency initiated.* Other paid workers not in education (for example, a local community worker or a nursery administrator) have ideas for courses related to their geographical area of work or agency roles.

Pioneer Work contacts another agency or vice versa. Depending on the type of agency, initial negotiations will have taken place with the workers, a core group of unemployed people or maybe a mixture of both. An idea for a course may have arisen from unemployed people themselves, or from workers who perceive certain needs, or from discussions between an agency/agencies and Pioneer Work. Examples of this from the research include:

A. One of the music courses based at a drop-in centre was requested by some of the users who spend most of their time playing instruments. They had decided that they wanted to know more about music. The users placed this demand on the centre's workers, who then negotiated with Pioneer Work for funding for a music course. The actual pre-course planning was undertaken by the centre workers and users, a Pioneer Work organiser and, in the latter stages, with the tutor. He was already known to the centre, having done some voluntary work with them in the past. The course was only publicised to a limited extent because it was first and foremost for the existing users.

B. One of the women's courses took place in a nursery. It developed from a need the nursery's administrator saw for the women whose children were using the nursery to come together for 'more than a coffee and a chat'. The administrator felt there was a need for a course which would incorporate a variety of topics including child development and women's health. She made contact with Pioneer Work and a course at the nursery was negotiated between one of the Pioneer Work organisers and her. Posters were put up in the nursery and publicity leaflets were handed out. In addition, before the course began, nursery staff and the tutor, who had been recruited by Pioneer Work, talked to women whose children attended the nursery.

C. The idea for the community issues course (described in detail in Appendix 1) arose from detailed discussions between Pioneer Work and a tenants' association supported by their community worker. The course was 'group-determined', but the idea for it arose initially from the joint discussions.

D. The idea for a 'family matters' group at a health centre on a housing estate in Leeds was conceived jointly by a Pioneer Work organiser and community education workers in the area. This joint initiative developed from discussions both agencies were having at the time about provision in that locality. Once the decision for such a course had been taken and permission obtained to use the premises, the tutor, who had been agreed upon by both agencies, was then paid to undertake outreach work. She did this in a number of ways: door-to-door knocking, talking to people in the mother and babies group in the health clinic, and talking to health visitors and workers in the area so that they could discuss the course with women with whom they were in contact. The tutors also used posters in the clinic, local shops, community centres, etc., to publicise the course. Negotiations of curriculum with students here and in example (*B*) took place only when the course had actually started. On the other hand, the content of the music course had been discussed with some of the participants beforehand but only in broad terms; detailed content negotiations continued throughout the course.

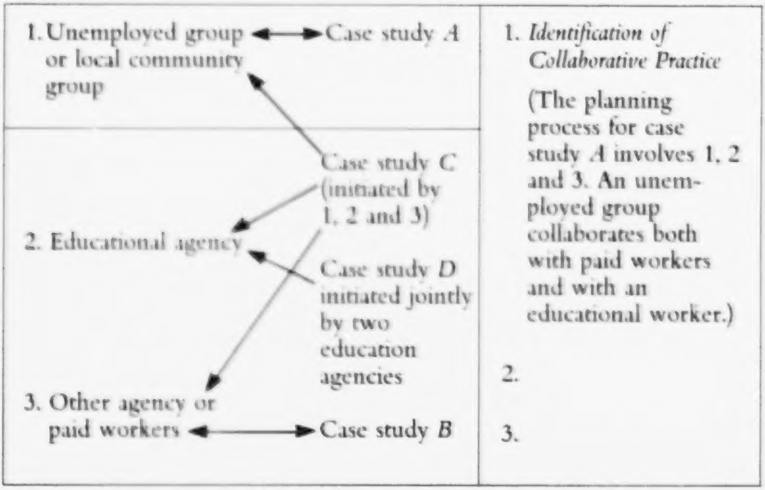
The examples of inter-agency collaboration from case studies *A*, *B* and *D* deal only with courses which had been established eight to ten weeks prior to the actual research. Other courses were examined, such as the community issues course in case study *C*, which had been running over a far longer period. With these, the inter-agency relationship consisted of a continual process of negotiation and evaluation.

The relationship between original ideas for courses and the subsequent course planning in the context of inter-agency collaboration is represented in Table 12.

Table 12. *Inter-agency collaboration*

Agency or group originator/ initiator

Planning process and outreach


1. Unemployed group or local community group
Case study *A*
Case study *C* (initiated by 1, 2 and 3)
2. Educational agency
Case study *D* initiated jointly by two education agencies
3. Other agency or paid workers
Case study *B*

1. *Identification of Collaborative Practice*

(The planning process for case study *A* involves 1, 2 and 3. An unemployed group collaborates both with paid workers and with an educational worker.)

2.

3.

From the case studies outlined above, it is clear that the initiator in case study *A* was the unemployed group, whereas in case study *B* it was the nursery administrator – the 'other paid worker'. Case studies *C* and *D* developed from joint initiators. Similarly, from the case studies, it is possible to identify which agency or group collaborated subsequently in planning and outreach in order to implement course ideas.

5.2 The Functions of Inter-Agency Collaboration

The planning process entails identification of a number of functions of inter-agency collaboration. A check-list of these is offered below:

Special functions of Pioneer Work	**Specific functions of other agencies**
(a) Funding of tutor	(a) Premises (including heat, lighting, rent, etc.)
(b) Funding of child-care	(b) Child-care facilities
(c) Monitoring and evaluation	(c) Possible core group

Functions which can be offered by both

Recruitment of tutor
Tutor support
Recruitment of child-care workers
Publicity
Outreach
Student support
Teaching materials
Teaching aids

The relationship between Pioneer Work and the agencies varies in terms of provision and support required and, indeed, obtained. The type of collaboration will depend on the requirements and needs of the individual courses, groups and agencies. Sometimes Pioneer Work will only require a building or a meeting room from another agency, whilst in other cases an agency may wish to obtain only funding for a tutor from Pioneer Work. However, Pioneer Work monitors and evaluates every course. In practice, the most successful course development occurs where resources from professional agencies are combined with those of the voluntary or informal sector.

The relationship between Pioneer Work and other agencies is far more than an immediately practical one. Inter-agency collaboration is valuable as a way of making adult education more accessible to diverse groups of people. Moreover, such partnerships can improve the service, too. Having identified the processes involved in inter-agency collaboration, it is now necessary to examine the courses in practice.

Reference

1. ACACE *Continuing Education: From policies to practice.* ACACE, 1982, p 60.

6

Courses in Practice

6.1 Aims and Objectives of Tutors

At the beginning of a course, tutors are asked to explain their course aims and objectives. The objectives of the sixteen courses include the following:

> *'To get a group together. Finding something that would motivate them, in order to help mould them into a group.'*
>
> *'To help students become more aware of themselves and their environment.'*
>
> *'To combat boredom, apathy and depression, prevalent amongst unemployed people. To give them a feeling of achievement and also the sharing and caring so important in a group.'*
>
> *'To provide a course which would help women increase their awareness of opportunities that are available to them – to increase confidence, and hopefully feel less isolated in the home . . . maybe go on to other things later.'*
>
> *'To form a group that would want to go on to do interesting, exciting things – tenants' groups, community action. To give people a sense that they have the right to expect certain things.'*

When tutors discussed objectives, certain key elements frequently occurred, such as increasing people's confidence, helping people to be more aware of the choices open to them, creating a group identity, alleviating boredom through discussion, and creating awareness of individual and collective possibilities.

Two particular strands appear from these general aims and objectives. On the one hand, information given to individuals in order to make more choices in their lives. On the other hand, the importance of individuals coming together in a group which may provide an informal support network and the strength to press for their own objectives. Each tutor had her/his specific aims and objectives. The following are extracts from a few of these:

> *'To provide women with information about and contact with the range of educational and training opportunities available. To give women a taste of study and provide an introduction to study skills. To examine some of the issues affecting women at work, in education and the home.'*
>
> *'To have people enjoy new technology, break down the barriers and fears of new technology.'*
>
> *'To give a basic understanding of what new technology can do and to learn a little about programming.'*
>
> *'To develop practical skills, to research subject matter on the media . . . to create and develop an interest in women and art.'*
>
> *'When finished, hopefully the students will know more about the history of Bradford . . . to make them more aware of the place they live in and to develop skills in research and to produce something concrete by the end of it.'*
>
> *'To try to provide a platform where community issues or the process that the community is involved in may be discussed.'*
>
> *'To bridge the gap between popular and classical music. To make music in general, but especially written music, more accessible.'*

Even where aims were more narrowly defined in terms of subject area and approach, tutors tended to leave room for manoeuvre in order that the development of the syllabus content could be a point of discussion, negotiation and development within the class.

Tutors were asked whether or not their aims and objectives had been achieved. A point made by many was that the courses were too short for their broader aims and objectives to be attained in full, but that they felt that they had reached some specific goals. The *New technology* tutors thought that they had made their subject more accessible and broken down barriers; the *Local history* tutors felt that their students had gained knowledge about the locality and had some understanding of researching sources even though they did not complete a project. The *Art* tutor who had stated that one of his course aims was to combat apathy and depression commented 'It surprised me how my subject lends itself to this aim and how therapeutic it has proved to be.'

Tutors on some of the less structured women's courses were not so sure that their aims had been achieved. Among these tutors, there was a general feeling that the courses had turned out to be less structured than expected. One tutor commented 'Some of the more direct input was missed because I was not able to introduce material in a more formal way. Some women wanted to take issues a lot further whilst others would have been driven away by any formal teaching.' A comparison with a more formal women's course is outlined later in this section.

In order to try to classify tutors' aims and objectives, an attitudinal scale was adopted. Tutors were asked to state the importance of particular goals on a scale of importance when establishing their aims and objectives (Table 13).

Table 13. *Aims and objectives – scale of importance*

	Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant
Encouraging personal growth	11	2	1	–	–
Developing practical skills	4	7	2	–	1
Encouraging education/ academic attainment	1	2	6	3	2
Empowering students to take control over their own lives	7	3	4	–	–
Encouraging students to become more politically aware	5	3	3	1	2
Encouraging students to become tutors themselves	–	4	2	2	6
Encouraging students to obtain a liberal education	4	7	3	–	–

The table shows that tutors on the whole wish to create an environment where individuals can be encouraged to develop and be more aware of the opportunities, if any, around them. 'Encouraging personal growth' scored highest on the scale of importance, showing that a sample of tutors covering a wide range of different subject courses all felt that a commitment to individual growth and development was most important. 'Developing practical skills' and 'Encouraging students to obtain a liberal education' scored next highest, with 'Empowering students to take control over their own lives' also rated highly.

In the taped interviews, tutors explained or expanded on their responses. By the development of liberal education (which was not defined for them), they meant a commitment to a critical, open-ended discussion of issues. As part of this process, particularly with unemployed people who had limited educational experience, the development of practical skills was seen as important. These range from using a computer, painting, or playing an instrument, to researching historical sources, using a library, reading/writing, and study skills. The tutors felt that these activities should be integrated with a sensitive exploration of broader issues. Using a computer, for example, was followed by discussion about the impact of new technology on people's lives. On a welfare rights course, an examination of students' own problems and experiences with the DHSS led into an examination of a number of general social policy issues. In the *Community issues* course, the problems facing tenants in one area were the basis for general discussion of social policy issues.

Overall, then, there is a broadening from a specific, local and practical context, via students' own concerns and experiences, to a wider and more general framework. Such issues are, of course, endemic in liberal adult education but successful practice is much more difficult in community-based contexts, where learners often have no experience of further and higher education, than it is in other settings.

Encouraging students to become more politically aware was regarded as important by more than half the tutors, but only when defined in a broad way to mean awareness of issues which affect people's lives and the distribution of resources. It is interesting to note that only a minority of tutors rated 'encouraging academic or educational attainment' highly. This would seem to contradict the extremely high rating given to liberal education. In fact, it illustrates a commitment to a particular type of liberal social purpose adult education with a stress on individual and collective awareness, which is not necessarily the same thing as encouraging individual academic attainment *per se*. As later sections illustrate, however, tutors did in practice provide much educational counselling and support and encouraged students, where appropriate, to continue on other courses.

A few tutors saw scope in encouraging students to become tutors themselves. In the *Art* class, students are encouraged to replace the tutor when he or she is otherwise engaged, whilst in other courses, tutors hope that students will act as informal tutors, sharing information with others.

The establishment of aims and objectives is likely to take into account both general and specific goals. Some of these may be attained, but, as one tutor said, 'Many objectives are more long-term – hopefully this course has helped them to have a greater understanding of what they are involved in, but the aims have to be seen in terms of doing courses over a number of years.'

6.2 Social/Political Issues

Given the liberal adult education focus of Pioneer Work, it was important to investigate whether tutors were trying deliberately or explicitly to widen their subject area to include social and political issues.[1] It seems that tutors generally feel that their courses do incorporate such wider issues. Some stated that issues arose without them trying deliberately to include them. In the *Community issues* course, for example, such issues are a focal point. The tutor felt that his role was to 'provide access to issues and act as a resource for the group', but that it was not his role to impose a particular perspective (which is or should be common practice in other educational settings). When discussing issues such as the rating system and the abolition of the Metropolitan Counties, the tutor deliberately looked at arguments which were advanced by different groups.

The course content of *Welfare rights* also included broader issues. The tutor felt that to understand the welfare system, it was important to know something of its history, and the changes that it had undergone, the latest being the Government review of the social security system. It was also necessary to analyse the impact of the welfare system on different social groups. *Local history* tutors stated that social and political issues arose naturally from their subject, which embraced social conditions, urban issues and industrial decline. These in turn were often considered in a broader rather than just a local context.

Several tutors commented on the importance of translating general issues into more personal terms, or vice versa. Moreover, some tutors felt that people were all too ready to blame failure in their lives on their own inadequacies and that they, the tutors, should help to redress the balance. One women's tutor stated that a discussion on the NHS, and in particular cervical- and breast-screening, enabled women to realise the extent to which their access to medical services was dependent on decisions which they were personally not well-placed to influence. Another talked about looking at issues through women's own lives; this, she felt, increased political and social understanding of the processes involved.

Obviously, with this type of input, tutors have to be honest about their own values. One tutor summarised the views of many in the following way:

> *'When presenting different arguments to an issue, I don't believe this can be done in a "neutral way", it has got to be made clear where you stand.'*

In discussions on the welfare state, the NHS or urban decay, the tutor's viewpoints were made explicit. There was a general feeling that the tutor's personal values should be made explicit, since all tutors would inevitably have their own value systems.

Certain issues arose during the courses where tutors felt entitled to give their views, including women's issues, sexism and racism. Some women tutors felt that their personal feminist views were important in their choice of the content of the course. They felt, without being patronising, that consciousness-raising was implicit in their aims and objectives. Issues where there was strong disagreement between the women tutors themselves, and between the women students and tutors were women with small children going out to work, the women's role and what some women students saw as 'women's libbers'.

Sexism was a major problem in the group discussing relationships. In order to try to deal with it, sexism as an issue became part of the course content. One of the *New technology* tutors felt that the problem of sexism was accentuated by having a woman tutor, and the fact that the course was located in a women's skill centre. Some male members resented the fact that there were full-time facilities in *New technology* for women only. The tutor felt that she had to initiate a discussion on sexism and discrimination because she felt so keenly about the issue.

The problem of racism arose in some classes – in some cases, tutors were obviously shocked by the vehemence of the views expressed, and some certainly felt ill-equipped to deal with the problem. Once again, it was felt that one way to discuss the issue properly was to incorporate it into the session plan. It seems that both local history tutors discussed racism in terms of the historical basis of immigration. Other tutors would refute wrongful assertions when they arose, and tried to show how immoral racism was. All tutors stated that they attempted to explain clearly what their own views were, which often halted explicit racist statements, but it did not always lead on to constructive discussion.

These details from the research support the contention that there are major educational problems (whatever the setting) in responding to issues such as racism. This has important implications for staff development and training. Overall, tutors were aware that liberal adult education included the necessity of dealing with broad social and political issues. They were also aware of the problem of false objectivity, and were careful to tell groups when they were giving their own opinions. Only one tutor said that she had to deal with sexism against herself, and the only black teacher in the research was teaching a black class so that racism did not arise in this context. Nevertheless, the problems of racism and sexism are ones where tutors would benefit considerably from more support and training.

6.3 Factors Determining Course Content

Tutors were asked about the factors which determined their course content. These were extremely varied. Some were follow-on courses and thus the content had been determined after a lengthy period of discussion with former course participants, workers and other interested parties. One tutor commented that although the actual course was only eight to ten weeks long, the planning process itself had taken a matter of weeks to allow full negotiations and consultations. Apart from these, other groups, such as *Welfare rights,* had held some planning meetings about course content before the course.

The following quotations from tutors reveal other factors determining content:

> *'From my own experience of running courses before, I've found out what works and what doesn't. I've also learnt about the importance of the ordering of materials and the way in which topics are introduced.'*
>
> *'It is important to build on activities that women have confidence in – the mixed nature of the group meant that discussions were difficult . . . it was better basing discussion around practical subjects.'*
>
> *'I had to take into account the fact that members of the group had different expectations of the course. Some saw it as essentially a social event and came along for a chat, whilst others wanted to do more serious studying.'*
>
> *'Having seen how the people at the Centre interrelate and communicate, we felt that there was a need for some structured course on various aspects of different types of relationships.'*
>
> *'Things that interested me and also interested and were relevant to the group. You can't force subjects or materials on people if they aren't interested. I also had to consider factors such as literacy, use of language and limited resources.'*
>
> *'It has to be the type of work that could be produced with reasonable economy in the time and space available.'*
>
> *'I got ideas from my day release teaching but could only fit them in if they interested people. I looked for topics with visual appeal and I wanted to do a project with them but it had to be something which fitted into two hours per week – no more.'*

The *Local history* tutors said that one of the factors affecting the course content was the fact that students were only interested in looking at history over the past fifty or sixty years or within their own or their parents' living memory. This affected the preparation of the curriculum.

These comments show that a disparate group with differing expectations, the availability of materials and resources, tutors' own interests and experiences, plus the limitations of time and space, must all be taken into account when course content is being determined. However, the crucial factor is the marrying together, through pre-course and ongoing discussion, of the students' own concerns and experiences with the tutor's expertise. This process of negotiation is crucial if student-centred learning is to be developed. Again, this is a common problem in liberal adult education.

6.4 Course Planning

Given the multitude of variables which a tutor has to consider, course planning is extremely difficult. Taking into account course negotiation, predetermined syllabuses are rarely imposed on the students. The *Opportunities for women* course is an exception – it is the only course involved in the research where the syllabus was not discussed at length with students. The reason for this was that 'the sessions were drawn up on the basis of previous courses and previous input'. This is a well established course which has a built-in evaluation component, and thus the tutors have the views of previous course students to help determine course content. This course is atypical of the courses researched, as it has a more formal structure.

There is an interesting comparison, then, in the women's courses between those which were relatively unstructured and the *Opportunities for women* course which was pre-determined and more formally structured.[2] It seems to indicate that where relevant, documented experiences of previous tutors and students can be drawn on, then this should be done, and the adult education professional responsibility for leadership should not be ignored. This does not contradict the notion of a flexible and continuing negotiation over course content and curriculum design. It simply illustrates the fact that there are different starting points for courses.

The content of the *New technology* courses was based on the tutors' previous teaching experience at women's skill centres. Their approach, however, was flexible enough to meet individuals' needs:

> *'There were lesson plans for people at different stages, I tried to put people*

> *into small groups. The pace and methods were pretty fluid but there was always the intention to reach a certain goal with each group. . . .'*
>
> *'Our planning was based on the full-time course but simplified and made more flexible. As we were team-teaching, we knew that students were going to be able to have individual attention: this was important because the course was being taught in Punjabi, Urdu and English. This multi-lingual input was very important, as without it we wouldn't have got very far. We were able to discuss with the students how things were going and improve as we went along.'*

Tutors in all courses started with a course outline or syllabus, which was then discussed with the students and, where appropriate, changes were agreed. Tutors found that initially students would acquiesce with the ideas of the tutors and would have few ideas of their own. It seems that it is often only during a course or in a follow-on course that students will take the initiative in terms of the curriculum (due to increased confidence and knowledge, familiarity with the group, etc.). Because of this, tutors found that not only were they negotiating content at the beginning of the course, but that discussion would continue weekly, especially when new topics arose out of the existing negotiated content. How tutors planned their courses can best be described by themselves:

> *'I drew up an outline which I then discussed with the group; they decided what they wanted to do with it. But during the weeks different topics came out of what we were doing, so that the course plan had to change to take account of these new ideas.'*
>
> *'We had discussed in advance what we generally wanted to do but we would still decide before each lesson what we were doing next. It wasn't the first course I had done of this kind so I knew what materials to use. Nevertheless, every week I would do a lot of hunting around for books and materials which I could use.'*
>
> *'We had a syllabus which was used very flexibly according to student demand or rejection.'*
>
> *'At the beginning I used a sales pitch to get people in and encourage them to stay. I devised a series of topics which were then discussed with the group. The topics used were those which people were obviously interested in and had stimulated responses. There was other student input suggesting places to visit and trips to make.'*
>
> *'I designed a broad syllabus which would cover what I thought were important points. This was discussed with the students but I did impose some*

> *things which I thought it important to know about. I made a week-by-week detailed plan, designed with the lives and needs of the group in mind and their expressed need.'*
>
> *'Having prepared the aims and objectives, I made a plan. It was then a question of blending their ideas with mine. We had a weekly discussion on what to do next, marshalling together both ideas and materials.'*

It is obvious from tutors' comments that negotiation and discussion between tutor and student over the content and orientation of courses is extremely important. Of course, the process of negotiation is normally begun by the presentation, by the tutor, of an outline syllabus. Students' lack of confidence and their previous experience of more 'authoritarian' education contexts may deter them from initially offering their views and their own ideas on content. Those who are attending a follow-on course may be more inclined to make their views known. During the course, the students may well request alterations to the course plan, perhaps because of issues arising from discussion or because they have gained confidence.

6.5 Course Content

Both tutors and students were asked to describe their course content. Below are comments from both points of view. These show the differences in depth, length and quality of answers given to the interviewers' question on course content. Some students, and indeed tutors, would discuss the content at length, whilst others were much briefer in their responses. Students who attended courses with content continuity (local history, new technology) were more likely to discuss the subject in depth, whereas those whose courses included a whole variety of topics (women's discussion groups) tended to list, rather than discuss and analyse critically, the subject areas which had been covered.

The *New technology* students showed how they make progress at their own pace by the fact that they discussed different levels of work. The *Local history* group's comments reveal how different individuals within the same group can be totally immersed in different aspects of the subject.

New Technology – Tutor

> *'The groups had become very different as far as level reached in computing was concerned. This became rather exhausting for the tutor, given the numbers in the group. Work done on this course was very varied. Some*

course members who had attended past courses began work in another computing language 'C' – this is used a great deal in industry. One member continued working on his long-term project to solve particular series and equations. Others were beginning/improving and increased their knowledge of BASIC.'

Students' Comments

'I've got a rough knowledge about how computers work; how to put information in, the different commands. I understand now that computers can distinguish between commands and that there are ones that it will accept and others that it won't. I have now got some appreciation how to approach the computer – that it has to be done in a very logical way. I didn't realise that before.'

'Very basic things about working in BASIC language, it has given me a limited understanding of computers.'

'Didn't know anything about computers. I've learnt how to programme, I understand a bit better the way the computer thinks, I'm getting to grips with the language.'

'I've progressed from micro to mini, from mini to mainline computing. I've also learnt a lot about the wider powers of computing – a broader knowledge of what the computer can do. I've a much firmer grasp of structured programming.'

Local History – Tutor

'We looked at the history of the locality. We did not go back as far as we could – concentrated on the more recent period. The class liked to dwell on the more recent fifty or sixty years, particularly environmental changes – housing, industry, redevelopments, etc. There have been visits and walkabouts within Leeds and elsewhere. We have tried to make some comparisons between the environmental and industrial changes in Leeds and Bradford. We visited museums in Bradford and the Jorvick Centre in York, which shows another way of presenting history – as an upmarket, commercial operation.'

Students' Comments

'I'm much more aware of buildings in Leeds than I was before. I didn't realise there were so many old buildings. We go on visits to places like the Jorvick Centre in York and we have walkabouts round the town, looking at old Leeds.'

'I can see how Leeds has changed over the years. I have learnt a lot about the buildings, architecture and history – I didn't realise that they both went together, so I've learnt more about history. We've talked about when places were demolished and why; for instance, did you know that some abbeys were demolished because their stone was needed for other buildings? Cinemas had their own architecture which has now gone because they (cinemas) are no longer popular.'

'Didn't know that there used to be a market off Leeds Bridge. I am now far more aware of my surroundings. Apart from looking at old buildings we discussed the conditions that used to exist in Leeds such as children down the mines – we've come a long way in a short time.'

Music – Tutor

'I started off with a brief introduction to musical pitch, rhythm notation and scales. I used tape recorded rock/reggae and jazz to analyse the structure of music. We used fairly simple songs but ones which would serve to bring up new aspects of music theory. I encouraged the writing of music, which we then analysed. We analysed chord structures, chord changes and important thematic melodies. We then used instruments to reproduce the songs. I hoped the course would begin to dissolve the mystery around music theory.'

Students' Comments

'A bit of music theory, listened to tapes and tried to transcribe music. We discussed various types of music.'

'I didn't know how to make my drums stretch, so I learnt that. We did different music techniques, used tapes and cassettes to help us work out basslines.'

'We tried to break down what was happening on the tapes onto paper.'

Opportunities for Women – Tutor

'The content included various components such as study skills, educational counselling and advice, sessions on local employment and training opportunities, women and work, women and social security. There were visits to the local college's maths and communications workshops and a tour of the library. Sessions such as 'Being a Mature Student' and 'Where Now' were designed to assist women to make informed decisions about the next stages for them.'

Students' Comments

'I learned that I've been selling myself short for a long time. I'm more capable than I realised. There's a lot more going on in Bradford than I realised.'

> *'I've learned about the workshops in the college for English and maths; how the library works; they explained about filling in the forms to get a job. The lectures were very interesting. It was very oriented towards getting a job or a further course.'*
>
> *'I've learnt where to go to apply for courses and I've learnt to go onto a higher standard. I need O-levels.'*
>
> *'How to go about looking for courses, who to talk to about them. I know a bit more about unemployment and how awful it is.'*

Mothers' Discussion Group – Tutor

> *'Discussion tended to centre round practical activities such as cooking. One woman was interested in woodwork so we tried our hands at making jigsaws. Discussion included women's health. We had films on breast self-examination and cervical cancer. We discussed child development and the difficulties of child-care kept cropping up at every session. We did some welfare rights educational advice and a session on where to go for information on various subjects.'*

Students' Comments

> *'Learnt all about other people's children. We looked at a film about breast cancer.'*
>
> *'I learnt to work with other women. We made jigsaws, talked about benefit and educational advice.'*
>
> *'We talked about health and welfare rights.'*

Because students tend not to mention the entire course content, they probably discuss topics or aspects of the course which seem to them most important or interesting. Students from the same course can mention completely different things. In the above comments, only one woman in the mothers' discussion group mentions learning about other people's children. Similary, in the music group, one student talks about the tutor helping to make his drums stretch. In the rock 'n' roll group participants enjoyed different aspects of the course. Some talked enthusiastically about playing instruments and writing songs, whilst others discussed the state of the music industry and finding out about and going to recording studios. Individuals in the community issues course also perceived different aspects of the course to be important:

> *'Learnt how the City Council works, County Council, Committees, etc.'*

> *'How to start up a business of your own, what help you can get. We learnt about industrial health, women's health, what one parent families have to put up with and how the council works.'*
>
> *'Education – how teachers work. I found out that you can get involved in schools, that you can ask for an educational psychologist – I wouldn't have dared asked before. . . .'*
>
> *'Didn't know before where to go for problems. I didn't know who to ask if I had a problem. I know so much now. Also I didn't know that facilities like videos existed so that communities could use them.'*

It is obvious that people are likely to retain information that affects their own lives. This is emphasised in the *Welfare rights* course, where the tutor had discussed a variety of aspects of welfare rights and housing. The students, however, all talked in depth about particular topics that had been of specific benefit to them: how to deal and be assertive with the housing authorities; how to go about a housing inspection for repairs and how to claim for single payments.

Apart from particular subject areas, students' comments show how the courses have contributed to lifting morale in a number of ways:

Art: *'Having learnt different art techniques, I'm now less envious of people who have had an art college education.'*

Family matters: *'I learnt that I'm not the only one with problems where their children are concerned . . . I've stopped feeling so isolated and can cope with my problems a lot better.'*

Opportunities for Women: *'When I came to the course I was very depressed about not getting a job. This has shown me a lot of openings in education and I've met other people in the same situation, it was a terrific uplift.'*

A number of people mentioned social skills as part of their learning outcomes:

> *'We learnt how to work together.'*
>
> *'I learnt how you've got to listen to other people.'*
>
> *'I learnt how to get on with other people.'*
>
> *'I've learnt to share ideas.'*
>
> *'I get on better with other people now – I can take them more for what they are.'*

These comments are all to do with learning to work in a group situation. Whatever the specific subject matter, all these types of community adult education courses must develop some form of group cohesion and identity which enables participants to express their views and concerns. Without this, tutors' aims of personal development and 'empowering' cannot be achieved. Indeed, for any kind of critical, liberal adult education, the group dynamics aspect is crucial. In other kinds of courses (vocational ones, for example), learning is facilitated if there is a positive group identity, but does not depend on it. In these courses, however, positive inter-group relationships are a fundamental and essential prerequisite for further development.

People learn a variety of things from a course. The most likely topics to be retained in the student's mind are those that have made a personal impact on that person's life (either in a practical sense or as an interest).

6.6 Some Common Problems

All tutors experience problems, some common to all adult educators and others unique to this particular type of informal adult education.

Course pitched at the correct level. Tutors were asked whether they felt that their course content had been pitched at the correct level for the group. Whilst some tutors were satisfied that they had managed from the start to use the right approach, others felt that initially they had not. Both local history tutors felt their input at the beginning of the course was too great. They tried to change this by talking less and 'by reducing my presence and allowing them (the students) to determine what was happening more.'

The *New technology* tutors, who were team-teaching, had begun the course from a theoretical standpoint, as was their practice in their full-time, college-based teaching. The tutors felt that for this particular course it was the wrong approach, and that they should have begun with the practical basic programming, and later on possibly discussed theory. They thought that the students might have had a greater interest in the theory and the politics of the new technology after they had become familiar with the computers themselves. The art and music tutors also commented on the failure of a theoretical start to their courses. Instead, they incorporated theory into more practical teaching approaches.

Some tutors had to experiment with approaches and methods in order for the content to be at an appropriate level for the group. One tutor said that as her group was mixed in terms of educational backgrounds and experience, it was difficult to appeal consistently to everyone in the group. Some sessions, she felt, were not appropriate for everyone. This point is illustrated by another tutor's experiences. Part of her negotiated curriculum was a session on 'living on a limited income'. The tutor planned to discuss cheap and nutritious foods, the most economical ways of cooking, saving energy, etc. During the session, it was made obvious to the tutor that many of the participants had no need for this type of discussion. The tutor felt that her input had been patronising.

Tutors who felt that their content was pitched correctly gave the following reasons for this:

> *'The fact that it was negotiated content with students helping to determine syllabus and pitch; that achieving the appropriate level was due to a long process of negotiation.'*

Having taught the same course previously, a *New technology* tutor said that she had determined the level by making the assumption that none of the students would know anything about the subject to start with. Tutors learn how to pitch content at the appropriate level through trial and error. Those with previous experience in informal adult education will have an advantage. It is obviously important for them to communicate constantly with the students in order to assess and evaluate their input.

Fluidity of numbers. Tutors discussed the problems of fluidity of numbers in their group. Many seemed to know why people had 'dropped out' – they had either found out from other students or relevant workers, or had been in touch with the people themselves. People dropped out for a variety of reasons:

Reasons for leaving course

Obtained a job
Accepted on full-time course
Personality conflicts
Group had clique feeling
Not making enough progress
Not kind of course wanted
Level of English
Only Black person in group
Child-care, family commitments
Teachers' strike
Illness

These are by no means all the reasons why people drop out; tutors did not mention that they themselves might be to blame. There are reasons to do with family, illness, or other commitments which a tutor or organiser can do nothing about; but factors such as group identity excluding others, people's level of English when not their first language, and the lack of Black people attending groups can and should be taken on board by Pioneer Work. The art tutor was able to stop his class from becoming an exclusive clique by getting them to help with recruitment: 'I have a nucleus of regulars who have been very supportive in courting newcomers to stay.' Other tutors talk about the importance of taking time to talk to people as a group *and* as individuals, especially when they first attend the course.

All groups had a nucleus of people, but some groups were more fluid than others. Tutors dealt with fluidity in a number of ways. Recapitulation or summarising was used, often with the help of the class to check what had already been discussed. One tutor reported: 'In each session, we did a detailed synopsis of previous sessions.' Handouts were used to summarise material, and some tutors stated that they discussed certain issues more than once. Many tutors tried to make each session an entity in itself, even though they felt that sessions were more effective 'when built on each other'. Nevertheless, making each week's class a self-contained unit helps to solve the problems of fluidity of numbers.

Problems related to individual students. The type of individual problems that tutors commented upon would be common, on the whole, to any adult education group. They included dominating individuals, people lacking confidence or motivation and personality clashes. Individuals with severe depression, however, must be more frequently found in courses geared towards the unemployed than in others.[4] People with such problems often need a great deal of personal attention and counselling. Those with personal or mental health problems can become disruptive in a course when seeking too much attention, and this can be very difficult for a tutor to deal with. In one such incident, the students wanted to ban such a person from the course but the tutor was loath to create a precedent, or to refuse help and support to someone so obviously in need. Thus, every time he became disruptive, the tutor had to take the student out of the room and talk with him. Incidents such as these can easily prevent other students from attending a course again.

In the community issues group, problems were created because of community conflicts between members of the group. These conflicts were confronted during the sessions, as well as by the tutor talking to individuals before and after sessions. A problem of a different nature had to be dealt with in the relationships discussion group – vulgar language from some of the young men made it very difficult for people, especially young women, to discuss their personal lives and problems: people became very embarrassed. Again, attempts were made to discuss this problem explicitly within the group.

Resources. Resources were difficult for some tutors to obtain and make use of. Equipment such as video recorders and slide projectors was only available if booked in advance and the tutor (who may not have transport) would have to collect and return them to their particular community location. Relevant videos, written material and visual aids were also, in general, difficult to obtain. Many tutors had to provide their own teaching aids and resources.

Environment. Most of the tutors were satisfied with the environment in which the course was held. Criticisms which did arise were that buildings lacked facilities, they were a 'bit seedy', cold and damp, or intimidating. One course was held in an open-plan room where other activities were happening at the same time; hardly conducive to concentration or serious discussion or study. One of the music courses was held in a small room which housed a variety of instruments. Some people would play on the instruments whilst others were listening to the tutor. Although courses take place in a variety of environments, one key factor must be surroundings where the class will not be disturbed. In spite of these problems, tutors and students in general felt that 'non-educational' locations, such as nurseries or a tenant's flat, should be used for educational activities.

Tutors in adult education are bound to experience a variety of problems, but some of these can be reduced by increased support. Further areas of work that indicate the need for more tutor support are teaching methods and materials, and these are discussed below.

6.7 Teaching Methods and Materials

In this section teaching methods and materials have been amalgamated, as the two often overlap. Below is a listing of methods and materials used within the different course categories.

Teaching methods and materials by course categories

Welfare rights	*General discussion groups*	*Subject courses*
handouts	discussion	handouts
discussion	brain-storming	computer terminal
lecturing	video	formal teaching
role play	formal talk	discussion
guest speakers	handouts	distance learning
practical housing	leaflets	small group teaching
inspection	board games	slides
letter writing		visits

walkabouts
various historical sources
group/individual research
project work
written material

Interest courses
practical work
reproductions
slides
art materials
instruments
demonstration
formal teaching
discussion

Relating to local issues
discussions in whole group sub-groups
handouts
guest speakers
video
quiz

Women's courses
handouts
leaflets
video/film
posters
sharing practical skills
visits

The list shows that a variety of inputs were used in the different subject categories. Some tutors made the point that methods and materials were only used successfully in a class when a full explanation was given for their introduction, and when their use was clearly relevant to the topic under consideration. Also, their success will depend upon the stage in the course where they are used.

Using video as a teaching method can illustrate these points effectively. Video by itself is not necessarily a good learning tool; it is often very difficult to obtain feedback after students have watched a video. Its effective use depends on the tutor having a full knowledge of the video content, and the group being given some background to the subject. Videos are often very long and can leave little time for discussion – this should be taken into account by the tutor. It is often very difficult to obtain relevant material on film or video, so tutors may be forced to use material which is not fully appropriate to the subject under discussion, or the group. This was the case in the course on relationships, when the tutors wanted to use a video on sexual relationships but the only one available was meant for a younger age group. If videos dealing with personal issues are shown early in a course, they may have the effect of embarrassing people in the group, whereas the same videos may prove very effective if shown after members of the group have become familiar with one another.

The appropriate stage at which to introduce guest speakers on a course must also be carefully considered. Once again, their presence can be inhibiting for a group which has developed neither cohesion nor confidence in themselves and the tutor. Therefore, tutors felt that before having a guest speaker it was important that they (the tutors) had established a relationship with the group. Some tutors found that guest speakers did not have a firm grip of the subject under discussion, or had not prepared properly. Another complaint was that, on occasion, it was obvious that the speaker was not used to speaking in such an informal, student-centred setting, and was likely to pitch the content at the wrong level for the group. In one women's course all the women complained about a guest speaker's feminism: 'She seemed to dislike men intensely and I didn't agree with her,' 'She was very biased against men, we weren't as strongly feminist as she wanted.' People in another course stated that a speaker had been 'tedious and boring'. These are examples of speakers who, for one reason or another, failed to communicate with the group. There were also successful speakers whose input was both useful and enjoyable, but the failures show the importance of choosing guest speakers who can communicate well, and who can relate quickly to a group.

Discussion was the main teaching method in most of the courses. This tended to be directed discussion, initiated by the tutor and with the tutor acting as chair – this helped to give all individuals in a group an equal chance of contributing. Some tutors felt that there was sometimes too much unstructured discussion and efforts would be made to control this. In the art course, discussion was limited to the beginning of sessions, when themes or topics were being introduced, and the end of the class, when a discussion would take place of individuals' work. In some other courses, the class would at times be divided into sub-groups for discussion, and would report back later to the full group.

Tutors used other teaching methods in conjunction with discussion. The *Local history* tutors started each session with a formal introduction to the topic. Other tutors gave formal talks to impart specific information such as educational advice, aspects of welfare rights, introduction to contraception, and computer programming.

Handouts were seen by some tutors as a successful aid. They were given out at different times during courses. One tutor preceded the introduction of a new topic by asking his students to read prepared handouts; others used them to summarise sessions. In the new technology courses, they were used as aids for individual and distance learning. In one of the courses, the handouts had to be rewritten because English was not the students' first language. This draws attention to the fact that the success of handouts depends on the tutor sensitively investigating the literacy level of individuals in the class. Giving handouts to people with a low level of literacy could undermine their confidence even more.

Other methods were visits and walkabouts by the local history groups, who also used slides to facilitate discussion. Course content, in fact, depended to a limited extent on the slides which were available. The art tutor initially used slides but felt that they did not create a satisfactory interest. He found that reproductions were most acceptable. Role play was used successfully by the welfare rights tutor when teaching supplementary appeal tribunals. Students would each be given a role in the tribunal; they had to prepare their case and act it out. This method was also used in a session about communicating with a housing manager.

Two courses used games as part of the learning process. In the *Community issues* course a detailed quiz specially prepared for this course enabled students to come to grips with the complicated subject of local government finance. In the general discussion group, the tutor produced a game based on snakes and ladders, the function of which was to raise issues dealing with relationships.

Tutors prepare a variety of inputs for their courses. They feel that the success of these depends on (a) their appropriateness to the group, topic and environment; (b) their timing both during the course and within a session; (c) the group being adequately prepared for any new stimuli and the tutor having a thorough grasp of their use.

Teaching methods are a difficult subject area to ask students about, since many have not had the opportunity to think about this issue in detail before. Nevertheless, the research did try to extract students' views about methods using a show card. The effectiveness of this method is debatable, given most people's lack of forethought on this topic; however, responses were forthcoming. Students were asked which of the teaching methods shown they found particularly helpful. They were asked to give three choices in order of preference (see Table 14).

Discussion and other people's stories are definitely the most popular teaching methods with students. By people's stories, students seemed to mean other people's views and experiences; this merges into their general overwhelming support for discussion as the most favoured teaching method. The other methods have more or less equal appeal, probably depending on which ones were used in their particular course. Books and magazines seem to be more popular with men than women, but that may also have to do with courses which they attended. Participants' comments are more significant than the statistics. Comments in support of discussion as a teaching method included:

> *'It's good to hear other people's points of view. Discussion helps you to get to know people.'*

> *'Discussion with other people helps you to come to a closer personal assessment of yourself.'*
>
> *'Like to hear other people's opinions.'*
>
> *'Can learn a lot from discussion, makes you realise that other people have the same experience as you.'*
>
> *'Discussion is good because things are wheedled out of you that you would never usually tell anybody.'*
>
> *'It's good to hear what other people have got to say, we can have a right good discussion, can argue but no one takes offence.'*
>
> *'Learning by discussion is very valuable; an informal teaching approach is best as the teacher is not handing information out on a plate.'*

Below are responses about other teaching methods and some more general remarks:

Visual aids:

> *'I really enjoy slides – I can look at how Leeds was and is now and can discuss issues around that. Slides often take you back to your childhood.'*
>
> *'Enjoyed the videos, helped me to remember what we had been discussing in class.'*
>
> *'It is good to see a programme or film about a subject that the class is discussing. They can give you up-to-date information, plus a better idea about the problems or the issues that are being discussed.'*

Handouts:

> *'They help you go through the course stage by stage and at your own pace (New technology).'*
>
> *'They help me with my English and spelling.'*
>
> *'They are excellent, you can work from them yourself and can spend as much time as you want divulging the information.'*
>
> *'I would have liked far more handouts and leaflets.'*

Lectures:

> *'I like to hear somebody who is knowledgeable talk about a subject and I can think about it afterwards.'*

Table 14. *Preference for teaching methods*

1st choice	Women %	Men %	Total %
discussion	76.1	80.0	77.7
slides/video	4.3	6.7	5.3
people's stories	2.2	3.3	2.6
handouts	13.0	3.3	9.2
lecture/formal talk	4.3	3.3	3.9
books/magazines	0	3.3	1.3

2nd choice	Women %	Men %	Total %
books/magazines	0	3.3	1.3
discussion	17.4	13.3	15.8
slides/video	17.4	13.3	15.8
people's stories	43.5	30.0	38.2
handouts	8.7	3.3	6.6
lecture/formal talk	4.3	6.7	5.3
books/magazines	8.6	13.3	10.5
no answer	0	20.0	7.9

3rd choice	Women %	Men %	Total %
discussion	4.3	0	2.6
slides/video	8.7	20.0	13.2
people's stories	26.1	23.3	25.0
handouts	15.2	10.0	13.2
lecture/formal talk	13.0	13.3	13.2
books/magazines	0	3.3	1.3
no answer	32.6	30.0	31.6

> *'They can be difficult to follow and pamphlets can be difficult to read.'*
>
> *'I don't like lectures because they often talk down to you.'*
>
> *'Lectures are sometimes useful but the brain works better if you discuss problems rather than them always being explained to you.'*
>
> *'I'd rather have a conversation than a lecture.'*

General:

> *'I always learn better by listening and watching people. I'm not very good at learning by reading.'*
>
> *'I liked the informality – I don't feel scared about talking out.'*
>
> *'All the methods are helpful as a mix if the teacher knows how to use them.'*

These and other comments from the students corroborate the tutors' evidence that discussion is the main teaching method. This is backed up by other methods such as visual stimuli, handouts and some formal talks. The latter was the method most likely to provoke derogatory comments. (One might hypothesise that this is because most people's experience of this method dates back to school.) Learning from other people and from a variety of stimuli is only one of the outcomes for students. Others are discussed in the following chapter.

References

1. Appendices 1 and 2 illustrate in detail specific courses in practice.
2. For more details regarding the opportunities for women course, see Jean Gardiner *Women and unemployment: A case study*. In Bruce Spencer (Ed.) *Adult Education with the Unemployed*. University of Leeds, 1986, p 23.
3. On the liberal tradition, see R. Taylor *et al. University Adult Education in England and the USA: A reappraisal of the liberal tradition*. Croom Helm, 1985.
4. For evidence on this point, see J. Berryman *The Psychological Effects of Unemployment*. University of Leicester, 1985.

7

Course Outcomes

7.1 Tutors' Perspectives

Tutors were asked if they felt that some students had been more satisfied with the course than others. Some tutors felt that a group would settle down by the third or fourth week and all the students would finish the course feeling satisfied because they had shown some commitment and sense of purpose by completing the course. Others stated that as students were looking for different things from a course, they would be satisfied in different ways – some would have benefited from having the chance to meet other people, while others wished for and had obtained more formal, direct input.

Comments

'Every student has different expectations; each gets out of it what they want.'

'I tried to make it fit their expectations, so if people wanted relaxation, fine; but if they were looking for something more, then I would hope that I would help motivate them.'

Comments in particular subject areas

Art: *'The course satisfied more serious painters, you can't keep people who haven't any real interest.'*

Community issues: *'It satisfied those people who were already in organisations, however embryonic they may have been, probably more than those with just a general interest.'*

Women and media: *'Some were more motivated than others to really get down and work hard at practical work. Some were very keen to do a mural.'*

In courses such as these, as indeed in other types of liberal adult education, if people are not satisfied with the input, they will leave. Nevertheless, for those who stay, their satisfaction levels are likely to be mixed, and this will affect outcomes.

The following division by subject categories shows the outcomes that the tutors feel the students achieved.

- **Welfare rights**
  More confident/more questioning/more ready to give value to their own ideas/developed strategies that they didn't have before/doing more adult education classes.
- **General discussion group**
  More able to discuss more intimate part of their lives/thought more deeply about themselves/more of an idea about different types of relationships/more knowledge about contraception.
- **Subject courses**
  Confidence/broken through fear barrier of new technology/know more about new technology and can write short programmes/can try out different things with different commands/gone on to do other courses/feel generally easier going into a library and making enquiries/more confident about getting involved in adult education/more aware of surroundings/know a lot more about subject/now going to talks, exhibitions.
- **Interest courses**
  More awareness of written music/improved on instruments/improved in song writing/can now work as a group/know more about music industry/more confident/painting improved/more enthusiasm for life in general/going on to other courses.
- **Local issues**
  Became very involved in community/made links with other community groups/all increased in confidence, personal growth/going to various conferences/involved in national campaigns in housing/where to go to find out about things/more confident talking to people.
- **Women's courses**
  Increased knowledge about items discussed/motivated to meeting together after end of course/more social interaction/in future wanted full-time child-care/new friends/thinking about issues that hadn't been thought about before/going on to other courses, both vocational and non-vocational.

The tutors stress outcomes that are neither educationally (in the narrower sense) nor academically oriented. This correlates with their aims and objectives, which had far broader goals. Tutors see other aspects as being important outcomes – social aspects, in addition to confidence raising and a greater self-respect. They also think that people become more questioning, 'more ready to give value to their own ideas'. They feel that people who have attended regularly now have a far greater interest in the subject area and that they are motivated to continue to do something, whether this means the group meeting together, individuals attending other courses, or the pursuit of the subject in other ways (individual study, joining a club, going to exhibitions, etc.).

How did tutors assess the student outcomes? The *Opportunities for women* course had regular written work and a written evaluation at the end of the course. The *New technology* tutors could assess the students' work from week to week by their progress on the computers. Most of the other tutors said that they had no formal assessment procedure, but by talking to people and discussion within the group, they could find out what progress had been made. Indicators of progress included: 'explicit comments'; 'obvious grasp of the subject the regulars had'; 'they had obviously assimilated hard information'; 'they obviously know more than before'. In the art class the students' criticism of their own work, and their selection of work for an exhibition, showed the tutor how far they had progressed. However, one tutor stated that she found it difficult to assess outcomes: 'It was very hard to assess what they had got out of the course because they couldn't really take themselves seriously as people who had anything to offer.'

7.2 Students' Perspectives on Course Outcomes

Students were asked a variety of questions, including whether they intended to start new courses or had indeed already started one. Forty-two percent answered 'yes', 18% said 'no' and 40% did not know.

The courses which students said they were going to attend were varied. Some intended to go to other informal adult education classes like a women's discussion group, photography and art at the unemployed centre. A few were going to full-time courses such as a community care foundation course at a college, and a computer qualifications course. Some students wished to gain O- and A-levels, whilst others were going to attend informal workshop sessions at the local college.

When asked whether being on the Pioneer Work course had encouraged them to think about undertaking a more detailed course on the subject, once again 42% responded positively; these included people from the music course, *Opportunities for women, New technology* and from *Alternative health.* Ninety-three percent said that they wished the existing course could be extended and 70% of the students in the sample suggested that other courses should be held on the same premises. Courses suggested covered the whole educational spectrum: vocational, recreational, academic, qualification-oriented, basic education and creative subject areas. Students were more likely to see the course as leading on to a follow-up, or another completely different course than were the tutors. Most students wished to continue some form of education, and 80% stated that this was due to their experience of the Pioneer Work course.

Other activities. Tables 15 and 16 provide data to answer the question whether an increase in activity levels was an outcome of courses. The tables show people's activity levels before they were unemployed and when unemployed. The activities included do not cover all possibilities, nor do they take into account the fact that some people have never worked and that some women have not been in waged work for a very long time. Nevertheless, with these caveats, such quantifications can be of use.

Table 15. *Level of activity before becoming unemployed*

	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
In the community						
Yes	4	8.9	4	13.3	8	10.7
No	42	91.1	26	86.7	68	89.3
In a trade union						
Yes	2	2.2	5	16.7	6	7.9
No	45	97.8	25	83.3	70	92.1
In a political party						
Yes	–	–	4	13.3	4	5.3
No	46	100	26	87.7	72	0
In a club						
Yes	2	4.3	3	10	5	6.6
No	44	95.7	27	90	71	93.4
In a religious institution						
Yes	7	15.2	–	–	7	9.2
No	39	84.8	30	100	69	93.4

Table 16. *Level of activity when unemployed*

	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
In the community						
Yes	20	43.5	9	30	29	38.2
No	26	56.5	21	70	47	61.8
In a trade union						
Yes	–	–	–	–	–	–
No	46	100	30	100	76	100
In a political party						
Yes	–	–	1	3.3	1	1.3
No	46	100	29	96.7	75	98.7
In a club						
Yes	3	6.5	3	10	6	7.9
No	43	93.5	27	90	70	92.1
In a religious institution						
Yes	8	17.4	1	3.3	9	11.8
No	38	82.6	29	96.7	67	88.2

People who attend Pioneer Work courses are not likely to be those who are active in trade unions or political parties; the few who are will probably be men. On the other hand, the relatively few people active in religious institutions are likely to be women. The phrase 'in the community' includes those active in some form of voluntary work. Twenty-one people had become active in the community since becoming unemployed. Of these, fourteen stated that they had been encouraged since attending Pioneer Work courses. Predictably, the *Community issues* course accounted for some of these, as did women's courses and the *Welfare rights* course.

Hobbies/activities. Are Pioneer Work students likely to be involved in a myriad of leisure pursuits? They were asked about their hobbies before and after they became unemployed. Only 18.4% said that they had no hobbies (this compares to 3% of the ACACE national sample).[1] The rest had a wide variety of interests. Since becoming unemployed, over half said that they had taken up new hobbies. These included:

Women	**Men**
reading, writing, gardening, playing piano, knitting, woodwork, sewing, tenants' association, cooking, needlework, crafts	photography, poetry, birdwatching, jogging, art, voluntary service, sport, music, drinking, tenants' association, chess, gardening

Reading is the predominant activity or interest in the national survey.[2] This is certainly not the case in the research sample. However, handicrafts and sewing are important areas of interest to women in both surveys.

One quarter of the students stated that they had taken up new activities as a direct result of the courses. On the whole, these were to do with course subject area: art, new technology, local history, music. Moreover, some people said that coming to the course had given them the impetus to go out and do other things such as voluntary work or becoming active in their community.

When asked if they spent their time differently since doing the course, 56% said that they did not. Apart from the fact that the course may not have had that kind of impact on people's lives, the luxury of choosing how time may be spent is not open to all. Women with child-care, household and family responsibilities may have little choice about how they spend their time. Besides child-care facilities, going to other courses will depend on a variety of factors ranging from time and the distance of the venue from home, to whether or not a husband or partner will give the necessary support for the woman to attend. People who answered that indeed their time was spent differently now included a large number of those who were registered as unemployed. They gave the following reasons:

> *'My time is now very well mapped out with painting, photography and other pursuits.'*
>
> *'I spend a lot of time in front of the computer.'*
>
> *'I know a lot more people because of the group, so I'm not so isolated now.'*
>
> *'I'm now on call 24 hours a day to tenants.'*
>
> *'Now that I've become an active member of the community, I never seem to have time for anything.'*
>
> *'I spend half my time looking for a job and half my time doing voluntary work – before, I just looked for jobs.'*

> *'I'm more motivated to do other things now, I know so much more. I do lots of other activities.'*

People who said they used their time differently seemed to imply that now they knew how to timetable their day where before they had done very little outside the home.

Widening horizons. The question 'Do you think about issues to do with the course when you are not there?' prompted 73% to say that they did. The following list reports comments from students on particular courses.

Alternative health: *'I check that I'm giving the kids the right vitamins, food, etc.'*
'When my kids are poorly or upset, I know how to look out for what might be wrong as a result of what I've learnt from the course.'
'I have changed my lifestyle and diet.'

Women and media. *'I now do a lot of drawing and painting at home – I look at books that the tutor brought.'*

Local history. *'I look at buildings when I'm out.'*
'I collect postcards and historical newscuttings.'
'It's got me thinking about other kinds of history, got me interested in medieval history. I can take notes from history books so that I can look at them again.'

Welfare rights. *'I look for faults in my own house and in other people's.'*
'I go round looking at houses and thinking how badly made they are.'

People from all courses made more general remarks about how they thought of issues or discussed them with other people outside the course. Some said that seeing articles in the newspaper, or programmes on the television would trigger off thoughts about issues discussed in class; 'As we've got the information in our minds, if something relevant crops up, then we remember what we've discussed at the course.' Table 17 shows people's responses when asked if the course had encouraged them in different ways.

Table 17. *Has the course encouraged you to . . .?*

	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Read about the subject						
Yes	23	50	16	53.3	39	51.3
No	23	50	14	46.7	37	48.7
Write in any way						
Yes	16	34.8	10	33.3	26	34.2
No	30	65.2	20	66.7	50	65.8
Discuss subject with family/friends						
Yes	39	84.8	24	80	63	82.9
No	7	15.2	6	20	13	17.1
Think about major social/political issues						
Yes	25	54.3	13	43.3	38	50
No	21	45.7	17	56.7	38	50

The reading category incorporated books, magazines, pamphlets, handouts, newspaper articles. Some students said that they were now more likely to read articles on their subject area than before. One *New technology* student commented that she had always avoided articles on computers but now she made a point of looking for them. Students, especially from art, music and local history, said that they took out books on their subjects from the library and others bought specialised magazines in computing and rock music. One participant from *Community issues* stated, 'Newspapers and magazines – I look at what is going on in education, housing and health, I just look at everything, I only used to look at headlines and now I read the details.' The courses encouraged some people to write prose, computer programmes, songs, minutes for meetings, letters to officials, etc. Even where writing was not a component of a course, students seemed to be encouraged to write at home.

Most people said that they had discussed issues with friends or family. One woman stated, 'They all want to know where I've been,' and another woman from the *Family matters* course thought that by introducing topics discussed at the course, she was better able to communicate with her teenage children. A man from *Local history* stated, 'I discuss points of interest that come up with my wife, maybe something about industrial archaeology, transport or architecture, how the Council decides what is going to be demolished and what is not.'

Half the sample said that the course had encouraged them to think about wider social and political issues. Many people stressed that they thought about social issues, but were not interested in politics. People who attended the *Community issues* course, however, felt that they had become more interested in politics:

> *'I tend to listen now to political programmes on television – to the councillors and MPs.'*
>
> *'I think of issues to do with housing, unemployment and social deprivation. Before coming to the course I thought that the mess people got into served them right; I am now more likely to look at the social environment.'*

Students from the *New technology* courses said that they were more likely now to think of the wider implications, in terms of its impact on jobs – destroying some, creating others and its impact on personal freedom. Local historians said that they were far more likely to watch social and political documentaries on television, and participants from one of the music courses now took a much greater interest in conditions of employment in the music industry.

The women's courses seemed to have given many participants much to think about in relation to the position and role of women:

> *'I've been thinking about problems to do with the generation gap especially for women – younger women have more opportunities than we had.'*
>
> *'I've thought about things to do with health and children – the level of child benefits.'*
>
> *'Problems of being a single parent without money.'*
>
> *'I think about being a woman and mother and how nobody realises what we do.'*

A central objective for most course tutors was to encourage a critical and questioning attitude amongst students, and the comments and quantitative information seem to show that this is certainly an outcome of the courses. In one way or another, whether reading, writing or just thinking about issues, it is clear that students feel that in certain respects the course they attended helped to broaden their outlook on life.

7.3 Social Outcomes of the Courses

When people were questioned about what they had enjoyed, if anything, about the course apart from the subject, 62% answered that they had enjoyed meeting new people (and, indeed, some of these felt that they had made new friends). When asked to give other reasons, 24% believed that it was 'just good to get away from the house' – 80% of these were women.

> *'Meet new people, have a laugh.'*
>
> *'More important than technique, meeting other people who are interested in art.'*
>
> *'The only time I drive the car during the week . . . other people's company, talking to people, not sitting there pretending you don't know, you can always ask – very free and easy.'*
>
> *'Getting away from my child for a couple of hours.'*
>
> *'It is women only, otherwise we wouldn't be allowed to come, get a chance to get out of the house and we have to speak English.'*
>
> *'I enjoy letting off steam.'*

There were many similar comments from students about the beneficial social aspects of the courses.

There was a specific question on whether the course had helped them to make friends; 66% said, 'yes it had'. Far more women believed this than men, and all those but one over the age of 45 felt they had made friends:

> *'There is always someone from the course knocking at my door and coming in for a cup of tea.'*
>
> *'I've always kept myself to myself but I talk to people more down here now.'*
>
> *'People I wouldn't normally associate with are now mates.'*
>
> *'I see them round at the community centre and have a drink with them.'*

When people were asked if their confidence had increased since attending the course, 62% replied in the affirmative, and 30% felt that their confidence level had increased dramatically as a result of the course. Not surprisingly, those who had not had experience of higher or further education were more likely to feel that their confidence had increased compared to those that had. Seventy-nine percent of those who said their confidence had increased greatly had no qualifications, whilst those few with higher education said there was no change.

Forty-three percent of the students said that they had felt 'cut off' before the start of the course; 56% of women said this compared to 23% of men. Isolation seems particularly acute for women with children. There is a strong correlation between people who felt 'cut off' before the course and those who now felt that they had gained confidence. Predictably, many of the participants who felt more confident also thought they were less isolated since doing the course. Overall, women, women with children, longer-term unemployed and those with no qualifications were likely to feel less isolated since coming to the course.

Table 18. *Feeling more or less isolated since attending course*

	Female		Male		All	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Lot less isolated	20	43.5	8	26.7	28	36.8
Less isolated	10	21.7	5	16.7	15	19.7
No change	15	32.6	17	56.7	32	19.7
More isolated	1	2.2	–	–	1	1.3
Total	**46**	**60.7**	**30**	**39.5**	**76**	**100**

> *'Stuck in the house with the kids, the course is a kind of focus for the week.'*
>
> *'I don't get out very much, it is nice to meet new and friendly people.'*
>
> *'I'm a loner – it doesn't bother me to be on my own – I like the freedom.'*
>
> *'Felt very isolated looking after my mother and the children, I never got out of the house.'*
>
> *'Don't see people very much – this class is something to look forward to.'*

7.4 Summary

It is clear from an examination of the outcomes as perceived by both tutors and students that the courses were valuable in a number of ways. In terms of personal development, 92% felt that their confidence had increased since attending the course, and 30% of these referred to a dramatic increase in confidence. Social aspects were also extremely important. Sixty-six percent said that the course had helped them to make new friends. It is worth noting that this factor was particularly important for older people. Everyone over 45 (except one person) felt that they had made friends as a result of the course.

From a liberal adult education perspective, it is important to note, in addition to individuals' increased confidence, that the majority of participants were more willing or able to 'question things'. This is a significant outcome in itself, whether expressed through discussion, reading, writing, or more active involvement in the community. Another significant outcome is that 50% of participants stated explicitly that the course had encouraged them to think about social and political issues.

The tutors' scale of importance for various aims and objectives, which was examined in an earlier section, did not put educational attainment very high. It is significant, therefore, that 42% of participants said that they intended to start, or had already started, new courses. The same number stated that the courses had encouraged them to undertake more detailed work in a variety of ways. In addition to this, 93% of participants wanted the existing courses extended, while 70% suggested other courses which should be held on the same premises. Thus, there is evidence both of a broadening of educational interests (by suggesting other courses in the same setting) and of a more in-depth approach to education in the desire to see the existing course extended. Given that most of the participants were not experienced in formal education beyond minimum school age, it is significant that there was so much evidence of students' wishes for educational progression and educational continuity. Overall the courses seem to have achieved both the broader liberal adult education perspectives which were hoped for by most tutors, as well as contributing significantly to the process of encouraging people's awareness of the potential of continuing education in various ways.

References

1. ACACE *Adults: Their educational experience and needs.* ACACE, 1982, p 26.
2. *Ibid.*

8

Tutors and Staff Development

8.1 Role of the Part-Time Tutor

Adult Education has traditionally depended to a very large extent on part-time tutors to teach a wide range of subjects. This has been the case in all settings, whether LEAs or other providers. Given the development of community adult education, however, many agencies and projects depend on part-time staff to undertake more than the traditional tutoring role of teaching a subject to a set group, usually in an educational institution, and being paid on a sessional basis for this. Tutors in Pioneer Work are recruited through adult education networks (via the LEA and the WEA), voluntary organisations (including community centres) and non-educational agencies (such as nurseries).

Tutors were asked whether or not they felt that before, during or after a course, they had been cast in a role other than that of the traditional tutor. The majority (twelve) said that they had. The most common role that tutors took on was that of a counsellor, whether in welfare rights, educational advice or giving many sorts of support. Tutors said that they were often approached about domestic problems and 'more personal and emotional aspects of people's lives'. They would try to offer what they saw as appropriate support. Most tutors gave some kind of educational advice, guidance or counselling. This ranged from informing people where to go to find out about educational opportunities, to incorporating into the curriculum a session on opportunities locally and discussing the various possibilities for individuals.

Tutors were also involved in outreach work, door-to-door knocking, chatting to people in nurseries, 'mums-and-tots' groups and unemployed/drop-in/community centres, or informing key contacts in the area about the course. Many tutors had something to do with the publicity, whether helping to decide on its content, devise it and/or distribute it. One tutor was interviewed about his course on local radio and another one wrote a press release for the 'Local Advertiser'. One tutor stated that he felt there was a danger in being cast in the role of a 'semi-community worker', trying to sort out problems between groups in the area. Another felt that because so many people had individual problems, her role as a tutor and her background as a social worker sometimes became confused.

Since the courses were spread throughout Leeds and Bradford in different types of institutions, it was very surprising that so few tutors felt isolated in their work. Those who did, however, felt quite bitter, as the following comments illustrate:

> *'I feel very isolated. There is no support. I have to do everything myself. There is limited backup, and resources. I don't understand the structure of the Adult Education Department or the LEA.'*
>
> *'I feel very exploited. I have to take all my own materials. I work much longer hours than I'm paid for and I'm expected to write reports and spend time discussing the course in detail with an organiser – all on two paid hours per week.'*
>
> *'I feel I would really benefit from talking to other people who are doing the same kind of work.'*

Although some tutors felt they received enough support from Pioneer Work organisers, outside support was also invaluable. Workers at centres where courses took place, and other tutors in these centres, provided an important means of support. Responses to the question 'What kind of support would you like?' came under the following headings: more resources and materials made available; help with session planning; meetings with other tutors doing similar kinds of work; and the need to discuss new ideas. These responses have specific implications for Pioneer Work. How, with limited resources, can Pioneer Work improve its service to part-time tutors? Their general implications for staff development in other settings are examined later.

8.2 The Organisation

Not only can Pioneer Work be criticised for not paying enough attention to tutors' needs, it also needs to ensure that tutors understand its aims and objectives. Six tutors said that they knew very little about Pioneer Work when asked to explain its objectives. Those who did have this knowledge had discussed the workings of Pioneer Work with their organisers and tended to be those who had been involved with it over a period of time.

In addition, tutors were asked if their approach to the course reflected in any way the fact that they were funded by the university adult education department. Only three tutors said that it had; the rest said that they were likely to use the same approach when working for other agencies.

Below are comments from those who said their teaching was influenced by having the university as their employer:

> *'Although the class was very unstructured, and it was difficult to obtain any degree of structure, I felt that demands were put upon me to improve the educational content.'*
>
> *'I felt that being run by the university meant that the course was being taken seriously as an educational project and not just a place for people to pass the day.'*
>
> *'Because it was a university adult education course, it was important to use a broad approach to the subject matter. This would not necessarily be so with another agency.'*

These comments indicate that some tutors did understand the broader, critical liberal adult education approach of Pioneer Work within the context of university adult education. But the fact that a number of tutors knew little about Pioneer Work's aims and objectives has further, serious implications for Pioneer Work's relationship with its part-time tutors.

8.3 The Tutors' Performance

Tutors were asked in what respects, if any, they felt they had failed in teaching their course. They were very critical of their own performance. Common responses were lack of adequate preparation; not anticipating students' needs; and, at times, not pitching the course correctly.

> *'I sometimes did not prepare properly and then I wasn't satisfied with my performance.'*
>
> *'At the beginning, I didn't feel terribly confident – I was so concerned about not imposing a structure that I feel I did not provide enough input.'*
>
> *'At times I didn't keep on top of the changing nature of the group development.'*
>
> *'All the women lived in the same locality and began to see each other between sessions. As they would decide on issues they wanted to discuss between meetings, it was difficult for me to anticipate what they would have*

> *planned. Sometimes the course would be completely out of my hands – I would become a member of the group and someone else would lead.'*
>
> *'At times it was difficult not to fail when circumstances outside my control would take over – the building, resources and even completely new issues.'*

Students too, commented on the tutors' performance. Many were loath to be critical. It was obvious to the researcher that personal relationships had developed between tutors and students, and that the latter felt protective towards their tutors. The majority of students said that they enjoyed the tutors' teaching style. Many comments came under the broad headings of 'communicates well', 'doesn't talk down', 'has an informal approach'. A selective range of comments illustrates this:

> *'He has a nice easy way – very helpful. He copes with people dropping in and dropping out very well.'*
>
> *'Help is there if you need it but nothing is forced onto people, she helps with shyness.'*
>
> *'He doesn't act like a teacher, he is more a mate than a teacher.'*
>
> *'She's like us – brought up like us, she made the sessions informal, she would introduce the subject, sit back and ask our opinions.'*
>
> *'He's so human, although so well educated, he deals with people less well educated than himself on the same level.'*
>
> *'He talks to us as equals, he's not the master of his pupils . . . he finds out about you. He made me talk in the class.'*
>
> *'She was very good at organising us, but not in a pushy way. She made us make collective decisions.'*
>
> *'He's a very good teacher, he knows his stuff but he doesn't lecture – he encourages us to discuss and tell what we know.'*
>
> *'She puts it over in a way that isn't heavy, she doesn't make it boring. She puts it over in a sensible way and listens to our questions. She doesn't take the rise out of people and make them look idiots.'*

These comments show that people really respond to tutors who can communicate well. The implication of responses such as 'doesn't talk down', 'talks to us as equals', and 'she's one of us' is that people are used to being patronised and made to feel inferior by people in similar positions to tutors. They are obviously pleasantly surprised when they find that they can relate to tutors and vice versa. This is an important point to bear in mind both for staff recruitment and staff training and development. Only 22% of students stated that there were aspects of the tutors' teaching style that they did not like. People in one of the new technology courses complained not about the tutors' teaching style, but about the fact that the class was too big, and levels too diverse for one tutor. In order to get more individual attention, they felt that an additional tutor was necessary.

In a music course, students criticised the tutor for not maintaining discipline or being strict enough. They thought the tutor could be too easily over-ruled and did not cope with people on the periphery of the class who created distractions. Other tutors were also criticised for not exerting enough discipline: 'Sometimes he doesn't keep control, he lets others take over a bit'; 'I would have liked the course to be more structured and there to be more discipline'. One male student accused a male tutor of having sexist ideas, whilst some students on a women's course felt that an outside speaker was too feminist. Some people complained of a tutor not being organised enough, not responding to their wishes.

Students do expect tutors to attend sessions with materials prepared and to be able to control a group. It is interesting that throughout tutors' interviews, some would state that they were either unwilling to impose structure or that people did not respond to a structured course. These courses tend to be the same ones which students complain about as being too unstructured and undisciplined. There is obviously a need for more pre-course negotiation and for tutors to learn to interpret signals and comments from students more accurately. These are further important issues for staff development.

8.4 What the Tutors Learnt

The tutors indicated that they themselves had benefited considerably from teaching the courses:

> *'Some of my students taught me techniques previously unfamiliar, my attitude towards painting has changed – I now paint with a much freer approach.'*
>
> *'I have learnt a lot that I didn't know about Leeds from other people's experiences.'*
>
> *'I learnt the necessity for pre-course planning and negotiation. It also reinforced the fact that you can never pre-determine the exact nature of content and participants' involvement.'*
>
> *'I've learnt how fearful people who come to courses such as these are about new technology.'*

> *'Working with people in these informal groups and responding flexibly to situations and group response.'*
>
> *'I learnt that there are a lot of nice women about. The public want information, they want an intense, fast-moving course. Students expect their money's worth from the tutor.'*
>
> *'There are a lot of people who don't come to classes who would be interested but there are lots of reasons why they don't. It made me realise how small the barriers have to be before people fail to surmount them.'*

Many of the qualities that tutors feel are needed in this area of adult education are similar to those needed in any adult education setting and are personal rather than academic. These include:

- reasonably extrovert
- a sense of humour
- patience and understanding
- empathy
- organisational abilities
- a belief in others' abilities
- sensitivity
- being able to accept other people's values
- taking a non-directive approach.

Although the tutors felt that it was important both to be enthusiastic and to have a clear, wide-ranging knowledge of the subject under discussion, other attributes were regarded as equally important:

> *'You need to have a notion of equality, between tutor and participants.'*
>
> *'You need to be able to draw on your own experience and not to feel threatened about using that experience.'*
>
> *'You need to be able to utilise resources.'*
>
> *'A good tutor is someone who listens to what students say, responds to their demands and who prepares properly.'*
>
> *'Someone who is seen as a "good sort of bloke" who can fade into the background and shut up.'*

The qualities that make a bad tutor, according to the tutors, include a patronising manner; an educationally authoritarian approach; a lack of commitment; a failure to recognise the experience of the class; inflexibility. Anyone who combined a narrow subject specialism with an attitude of academic and social snobbery was also considered, not surprisingly, to be a poor tutor.

8.5 Summary

It was stated earlier in the section that students' views about the tutors, and also the tutors' views about their experiences, raised important, specific issues for Pioneer Work but also general issues about staff development. These include the identification and recruitment of tutors who, in addition to relevant knowledge for a particular course, must have experience of working with groups in non-traditional community adult education settings.

In the long-term, however, recruitment structures and staff development mechanisms must be established whereby inexperienced people can be given opportunity for tutoring. These may be active users at an unemployed centre, members of a community group, or Asian women involved in their local community who have particular skills or knowledge. If such initiation is to be successful, however, a large amount of time and resources to provide staff development, training, monitoring, and support for part-time tutors is essential.

All tutors, once recruited, should participate in a systematic staff development programme, which includes the elements identified in this research. Again, such essential staff development functions depend crucially upon the identification and allocation of additional human and financial resources. The necessary constituent parts of such a staff development programme include negotiation with students. The research also identified both the need for tutors to develop a structure, but one with flexibility, and the particular problems of working with informal groups. Experiences about group dynamics, ways in which tutors can interpret signals from groups, and session planning and teaching methods need to be shared. In addition to these issues, it is clear from the research that tutors need support about how to deal with racism and sexism, and how to encourage or respond sensitively to broader social and political issues.

A staff development programme incorporating all of these elements need not be organised formally. Wherever possible, networks of tutors should be formed, and the precise structures for support may vary. This network, however, must be resourced if it is to operate effectively. There must be resources both for the payment of part-time staff to attend, and for the considerable input which will be necessary from experienced full-time staff.

9

Conclusion

It was pointed out in the introductory chapter that most analysts and commentators now accept that long-term structural unemploymnent is endemic in contemporary society. Adult education has responded to the problems created by unemployment in a variety of ways, albeit in a patchy, somewhat piecemeal fashion. Unfortunately, many of the initiatives which have been taken (like the vast majority of general responses to unemployment) have been necessarily *reactive,* and perhaps predicated upon the assumption that unemployment is a short-term phenomenon. Thus, many initiatives have been funded on a merely temporary basis.

The focus for the research in this report, Pioneer Work, is simply one example of a relatively small-scale initiative in one particular sector of adult education, struggling to develop long-term perspectives rather than short-term responses. Unfortunately, because of the short-term nature of many initiatives, and also because there has been insufficient emphasis on research and evaluation, many valuable lessons from practice in the field have been lost, or where they exist, inadequately disseminated. There are publications which shed light on this burgeoning area of activity – adult education with unemployed people – in the form of general surveys or overviews,[1] but there is not yet currently available a detailed study of the educational processes and the outcomes of community-based liberal adult education provision. The purpose of this research is to help supply this need.

9.1 The Educational Benefits of the Research

From the base provided by Pioneer Work, this research has drawn on the educational experiences of unemployed people and tutors. As was pointed out in an earlier section, attempts were made to demystify the research with the students, and its objectives were clearly explained to them. Questions they were asked about their expectations, course content and outcomes involved them centrally in a process of critical evaluation.

This opportunity for detailed discussion was as much a part of the educational process as were the courses which they had attended. Even before the results of the interviews were analysed for the purposes of this report, therefore, the research had valuable educational effects. The interviews were structured in such a way that the researcher was able to provide educational counselling and advice to students. In this way, a genuine collaborative process was developed which differs markedly from approaches which regard interviewees merely as providers of information for research.

In a similar way the interviews with the tutors provided opportunity for critical discussion and reflection. One of the issues highlighted, which is returned to later, was the need for more effective staff development. The interviews with the tutors, apart from providing the information for this report, became, albeit in a minor way, part of the staff development process. They also led to tutors meeting to continue the discussions which the researcher had initiated through the interviews. With both students and tutors, therefore, the research contributed to the educational process, rather than being something separate from it.

9.2 The Context of the Courses and Targeting

The courses which were investigated depended on the Pioneer Work programme, and were those courses which were running at one particular time during 1985. The reasons for the types of courses in existence were examined in an earlier section, and included the changing nature of the Pioneer Work programme as a result of analysis of differing approaches and initiatives.

The experiences of Pioneer Work and other similar programmes have confirmed the now commonly accepted view that unemployed people are not a homogeneous group. The educational implications of this are quite clear: attempts must be made to meet differing needs and interests with specific targeting. The research has indicated that, initially at least, community adult education with unemployed adults should be based around existing interests, issues and focal points. There may be physical or organisational focal points; examples of the former from the research include a 'drop-in' centre and a nursery, whereas one example of the latter was the *Community issues* course organised through and with a tenants' association. In addition, the needs of different age groups must be taken into account. People aged over fifty, for example, will have specific needs and interests which may differ in certain respects from those of a younger age group.

9.3 Expectations and Barriers to Access

The evidence from the research about the expectations of the students is extremely interesting at a time of long-term structural unemployment. Even though a wide variety of immediate reasons were given for attending courses, the majority (79) attended either out of interest or for specific information. Clearly, 'interest' is, or could be, an expression of direct educational motivation; the same point applies to those attending for 'specific information', for example the woman who attended the *New technology* class because she wanted to learn about computing to help her daughter. There are many reasons why people wish to learn or 'have education', but what is clear from this research is that this educational motivation was very strong, even though it was often combined with social reasons for attending. Given the assumptions which are often made about the alienation of many 'disadvantaged' people towards education, this is an important finding. Moreover, it was an educational motivation which was not vocationally-oriented. No respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the courses were non-vocational. As one woman expressed it: 'Why should it help me (with employment)? I didn't come here looking for a job.'

Even in a period of record unemployment levels, therefore, these findings confirm the conclusions reached in the 1982 ACACE report that there is a large pool of latent demand for non-vocational education.[2] The fact that respondents clearly wanted non-vocational adult education and not 'training' is extremely significant when major resources are provided for vocational courses but very little for community-based liberal adult education.

It is often assumed that school experiences have a major impact on people's willingness or otherwise to become involved in adult education. This assumption was not confirmed by this research, where only two students stated that they had not been involved in adult education previously because of bad school experiences. The most important barriers to access were more immediate and practical than attitudinal. These were: lack of information about courses; problems with child-care; problems with fees, and for women in particular a reluctance or inability to travel more than two miles to a course. These latter factors obviously reinforce the need for free, locally based courses with crèche facilities. Lack of information about courses cannot simply be overcome by increased impersonal publicity, since 65% of students stated that they knew about their present course via 'word of mouth'. To utilise 'word of mouth' networks effectively, however, there must be adequate resources and support for outreach and contact work. Many projects, including Pioneer Work, have very limited resources for this. This factor alone prevents the expansion of community-based courses for unemployed adults, and indeed jeopardises the continuity of present work.

9.4 Outreach

Outreach has been defined as 'A process whereby people who would not normally use adult education are contacted in non-institutional settings and become involved in attending, and eventually in jointly planning and controlling activities, schemes and courses relevant to their circumstances and needs.'[5]

An essential part of this process involves working with other educational agencies, non-educational agencies and voluntary or local community groups. Examples of these ways of working are provided in Chapter 5. It is important to emphasise, however, the role of the voluntary sector. Given the paucity of resources for adult education, local community groups and a wide range of voluntary organisations have much to offer when joint working is developed, for outreach, recruitment, publicity and pre-course planning. Voluntary groups are the key to the local network; they have community contacts which professionals could never have. More important than this pragmatic necessity, however, is the *principle,* in educational work with unemployed people, of working directly with them whenever possible in planning and organising courses. This may be with a tenants' association, whose members are predominantly unemployed, or with women involved in a nursery, who are unemployed (albeit some of them unregistered), or with core members of a users' committee at an unemployed centre.

Non-educational agencies and their workers have an important role in helping to provide educational opportunities for unemployed people. These agencies may be local authority departments, such as leisure services (with access to libraries and their facilities), social services (with responsibility for nurseries), or economic development committees (who are increasingly involved in schemes and policies for unemployed people), or organisations such as the TUC centres for the unemployed. As the examples from this research indicate, there are major benefits to be obtained by such collaboration.

9.5 Some Teaching Problems

The aims and objectives of tutors were examined in an earlier section, but it is interesting to note the consistency between the most important objectives as stated by the tutors, and the responses of students about what actually happened on courses. Encouraging personal growth was seen by tutors across a wide range of subject areas as most important. It was clear from students' reponses that tutors achieved this in practice, particularly through adopting discussion methods. Discussion and group experiential learning was overwhelmingly the most favoured teaching method.

It would be interesting to compare students' willingness to participate in discussion on these and on other liberal adult education courses with those at colleges and other educational institutions. There are strong reasons for arguing that having a course on people's own 'patch' and on issues related to them, based upon experiential rather than orthodox subject-discipline-based approaches, breaks down working-class suspicion of and resistance to 'education', and leads to more active and successful course provision.

Substantial discussion, however, depends on establishing group cohesion and trust. This can be difficult if there are latent or explicit conflicts. Examples are provided in this research of how tutors resolved problems with individuals, and also conflicts within and between groups in the community. Tutors, therefore, need counselling skills, empathy and sensitivity if these problems are to be overcome. This has implications for staff development and support which are examined later.

In addition to these issues, tutors identified the problems of fluidity of numbers. If students join courses at different stages, there are obvious educational and organisational problems. There are, however, strong arguments for maintaining a flexible approach if barriers to access are to be broken down. One of these may be formal or time constrained enrolment procedures ('If you are interested, enrol at 7 pm on Tuesday, 16 September . . .'). It is important, therefore, to encourage potential students to attend at any stage. It may then be possible to assimilate them into the group or encourage them to attend self-contained units of a course, or create interest for future courses or other kinds of provision. There is also a time-lag on community-based courses. If a course starts successfully, students create interest through discussing it with other people who live in their area, or are members of their group. These people should not be deterred from attending, since it is important to build on educational interest at a time when it is expressed – even though this may be several weeks after a course has started.

A further issue which was examined both with tutors and students was the problem of unstructured discussion. In their desire to avoid imposing a rigid pre-determined course structure on students, some tutors allowed discussion to become too unstructured and diffuse. The students, however, although overwhelmingly in favour of discussion, also wanted courses to be structured, and criticised some tutors for too 'loose' an approach. Again, this issue has implications for staff development. Tutors need to be able to share experiences about different types of community-based courses, and discuss collectively methods of striking a balance between free discussion and an appropriate structure.

9.6 The Tutors' Aims and the Outcomes of the Courses as Seen by the Students

Reference was made to consistency between tutors' objectives and the outcomes of courses as perceived by students. Most tutors rated 'encouraging personal growth and development' as the most important objective. This objective was at least partially achieved, since 92% of students felt that their confidence had increased since attending the course and 30% of these referred to a dramatic increase in confidence. As one woman put it: 'I learnt that I had been selling myself short for a long time. I'm more capable than I had realised.' Also, 66% stated that the course had helped them make new friends, which is further evidence of this aspect of the courses. The high rating given to this objective by tutors indicates an acceptance of a traditional liberal view of adult education which has always had a strong emphasis upon personal development.[6]

Another aspect of liberal education is the commitment to a critical, open-ended discussion of issues. Tutors also rated this objective very highly, with, where relevant, the acquisition of practical skills such as using a computer, painting, using a library, etc. The evidence from the students, which was provided in Chapter 7, indicates that this objective was met, with students from a wide range of courses broadening their horizons, developing their interests outside the course as a result of it, and generally developing a more questioning and critical attitude. An additional objective regarded as important by tutors was 'empowering students to take control of their own lives'; linked to this, more than half the tutors also thought that encouraging students to become (broadly) politically aware was important.

These objectives indicate a commitment to the social purpose and community action models of liberal adult education. Social purpose adult education has existed as a continuous, albeit minority strand in adult education since the nineteenth century. The idea of 'education for citizenship' to enable a genuinely participative democracy to emerge has been central to much of the work of adult education providers. More recently, the social purpose framework (developing critical, liberal and democratic processes) has been of central importance in the development of community adult education practice in Britain. This merges into the community action model of liberal adult education, where the objective is to work with the local community to provide access to relevant information about problems and issues which are defined by the community, and to encourage dialogue about these issues. Again, the evidence from the students indicates that these objectives were fulfilled to the extent which is possible on short courses (see Chapter 7). In all courses it is clear that there is a development from the specific subject areas to broader issues, such as the state of the music industry, the social impact of new technology, the position of women, the debate about public sector housing.

Overall, then, the objectives of the tutors did match up with the outcomes which were identified by the students. There was, however, one apparent discrepancy which was referred to in Chapter 7. Most tutors did not rate academic or educational attainment very highly, but there is overwhelming evidence that students wanted existing courses extended (93%) and suggested other courses which should be held (70%). The taped interviews with tutors indicate that they rated the general objectives examined above more highly than individual vertical academic attainment, but they were committed to the development of community-based social purpose adult education.

It is clear from the research, overall, that the provision of short, community-based courses can contribute in a significant way towards the broader objectives examined above, as well as providing a major impetus for educational continuity and progression. Major educational, social and political questions are raised here, and a brief discussion of some of the underlying issues may illuminate the specific research findings.

The seemingly simple dichotomy between adult education for individual access to higher education and adult education for developing collective community consciousness, in reality contains a number of complex problems. At one extreme, it is certainly hypocritical, arrogant and ultimately patronising for the academic staff engaged in such work, who are by definition beneficiaries of the higher education system, to dismiss the validity of adult education as an access route for disadvantaged but intrinsically able students. At the other extreme, it is manifestly absurd to pretend that *all* disadvantaged adults could or should 'progress' to higher education: in educational, as well as social and economic terms, this is not remotely on the agenda. But should able adults be *encouraged,* via Pioneer Work and similar sorts of educational involvement, either to obtain educational qualifications (GCSEs and A-levels, for example) or to move into full-time or part-time higher education?

Pioneer Work's policy has been pluralistic on these issues. A relatively small minority of courses have been explicitly geared towards access *per se*, though not always access to *higher* education. For the majority of courses, however, Pioneer Work has viewed access in much broader terms. Those who have wanted access to higher level adult education, or vocational courses, or other forms of educational contact have been given every assistance. (And it is interesting to note that in fact 42% of students from this sample went on to some further form of educational involvement.) But Pioneer Work has also been insistent that *non*-education access is often equally, if not more, important for both the community *and the individual:* thus involvement in community action, or the establishment of some useful, relevant and enjoyable community activity, or the coming together of 'like minds' over particular issues or concerns, are just as valid outcomes, in educational terms, of the Pioneer Work programme, as the 'conventional' access ladder to a higher level, formal education setting.

9.7 The Role of Tutors and Staff Development

There are various references throughout this report to the need for effective and systematic staff development programmes. The information from the interviews with the tutors indicates that the role of the tutor in this kind of community-based work is very different from that of a 'traditional' tutor. Chapter 8 referred to this broadened role of the tutor and examined a wide range of complex issues which confront tutors, and in which they need support and the opportunity to share experiences. These issues include the need for counselling skills; understanding unemployment and the way in which different groups are affected by it; the notion of tutor–student equality and continuous course negotiation; the need for inter-agency collaboration; the problems of structured discussion; group dynamics and conflicts within groups; and finally, how to confront sexism and racism.

This daunting list of issues can only be explored effectively if structures are established which enable tutors with relevant experience to meet regularly. This could be done by setting up networks of tutors, adult education organisers, other interested paid workers, and unemployed people themselves who are particularly interested in education. These should be established to cover particular areas (for example, across a town, city or appropriate rural areas).

To establish and maintain these networks, however, resources will be required. Part-time tutors should be paid for attending network meetings or courses, but just as importantly, additional resources are needed to release experienced full-time staff for this kind of work. If the networks operated effectively, various sub-groups could be established to examine some issues in more detail, such as the needs of women tutors, or issues concerning older people or ethnic minorities. It appears that such networks already exist in some areas, but in the main, staff development and support for tutors working in community-based settings seems to be patchy and piecemeal.

The most recent initiatives through REPLAN to develop staff development programmes through the Regional Advisory Councils and the appointment of ESG-funded workers in eighty LEAs are a welcome development, but these initiatives are not in themselves sufficient to establish and maintain the networks which are suggested above. There is a need for more substantial initiatives at both a national level – via the DES – and also at a local level – via a consortium of LEAs and other providers – to ensure that these networks are established and resourced.

9.8 The Need for Further Practitioner-Based Research – A Suggested Structure

More effective community-based provision for and with unemployed people can only be developed, apart from the obvious resource questions, if current and past experiences are drawn upon and analysed. Individual tutors need a framework within which the problems and issues they confront can be examined. The following section of this report suggests outline possibilities for developing such a framework, linked to the need for networks as described above.

It is suggested that all adult education providers and agencies should ensure that monitoring and evaluation becomes an integral part of every individual worker's job description. This monitoring (and management must ensure that workers are given time for this) should include information on:

- Target groups – who is provision aimed at and who in practice becomes involved.
- How are the target groups being reached – issues of outreach and contact work.
- Various types of provision – what is provided and the reasons for this, with case-studies.
- How are the courses taught and what are the most effective teaching methods.

- The outcomes – an assessment of the value of this provision as seen by both tutors and the users.

If such a format was adopted, individual workers would be helped to reflect critically on their practice, and existing provision could be more effectively evaluated. This format would be more valuable, however, if these experiences and case-studies were shared between workers and agencies, and this relates to the suggestion for networks already made.

If these networks were functioning effectively, they would provide ideal forums in which these evaluation reports and case-studies could be discussed. Discussion and evaluation of current practice lead inevitably on to policy questions. One possibility, therefore, is that each local education authority, in conjunction with other providers, could fund an action-researcher whose role would be both to service the proposed network, draw together individual workers' evaluation reports, and, on the basis of these, help formulate adult education policy options which could be discussed both by the forum and by appropriate committees and officers of the authority. In this way, both staff development, monitoring and evaluation, and policy issues would be inextricably linked, and feed off each other.

These outline recommendations indicate that there is an urgent need to develop new policies and structures for adult education, if the needs of those unemployed people and others who have not benefited from education since leaving school are to be taken seriously. At a broader level, it is clear from this research that unemployed adults have educational needs which are not being met by 'training' or vocational schemes.

This study illustrates the educational processes and a number of valuable outcomes of community based-liberal adult education. It is hoped that it proves useful for other adult educators, and encourages them to disseminate their experience of similar work.

Appendix 1

Working with Tenants and Community Groups

There are few detailed case-studies available about the content of and the processes involved in organising adult education courses with tenants and community groups, and women's groups in community settings. Appendix 1 provides details about Pioneer Work's involvement with tenants and community groups over several years, and Appendix 2 provides details of two different women's courses.

Aims and Objectives

The initial aim was to establish a dialogue with various workers and groups in specific neighbourhoods, and explore the potential relevance of adult education with them. Rather than advertising a pre-existing package, the aim was to establish dialogue so that the project and people in the selected areas could jointly decide what contribution, if any, adult education could make to their situation. This process is sometimes referred to rather narrowly as 'identifying learner needs',[1] with the assumption that adult educators can then meet whatever needs are identified. Pioneer Work takes the view that individuals and groups in the community already have much experience and expertise, and the need is to marry this up with whatever contribution adult education can make. This involves a more equal partnership than is implied by the phrase 'identifying learner needs'.

Establishing a Dialogue in Practice

There exist in most towns and cities a number of community groups. Often informally organised, these may be tenants' associations, residents' groups, local action committees, 'mums-and-tots' groups, playscheme committees, etc. In some areas, these may be supported by paid community workers or other interested professionals. These paid workers and the embryonic or existing community groups should be the initial reference point for adult educators interested in developing community-based provision.

In Leeds, the project took a decision to establish close dialogue with the small number of tenants' groups which existed and the few paid community workers. Initiatives were taken on two large 'typical' pre-war council housing estates. The housing stock in both areas had deteriorated through age and lack of maintenance, and there were above average unemployment rates. In both areas, the project had detailed discussions with the community workers and was subsequently invited to meetings with tenants.

At the tenants' meetings, it is interesting that no one was interested in 'adult education' explicitly, and they felt there would be no response to discussion about unemployment in the area unless it led to jobs. There was, however, much interest and detailed discussion about other major issues in the area which affected their lives, such as welfare rights, housing, the environment, the processes of consultation (or lack of them) with the local authority, and organisational and group issues for tenants' associations.

The crucial starting point was that plans were developed from the earliest stage with several tenants. On the basis of the issues which local people themselves had identified, the project and the tenants then jointly planned and organised two courses: *Welfare rights* and *Organising in the community*. The former was held in one of the tenants' sitting-rooms and the latter in a local community centre. It took several months to plan and jointly organise these two courses. This planning process with potential or core members of a proposed course is fundamental to its success or failure.

Content of Courses

Welfare rights. The *Welfare rights* course, which was attended by nine women and one man, was not formally advertised at all. People were notified in one part of an estate purely by word of mouth. There were five regular attenders from the street in which the course was held. The participants all understood that the course was not a CAB-type training course, but was intended to discuss critically a number of social policy/welfare rights issues which directly related to their experiences (for example, the introduction of the housing benefits scheme at that time), in the context of an introduction to the whole benefit system and its relationship to the welfare state structure. At the end of the course, tenants felt they had increased their personal knowledge and understanding, and it also helped when other people from the estate had queries about welfare rights. They saw themselves as a link to the experienced advice workers at a neighbouring information centre. One of those who attended has since become a full-time volunteer at this centre.

Organising in the community. Three members of this group had also helped plan the *Organising in the community* course. Unlike the *Welfare rights* course, this was advertised, but only locally, on the estates. At a general level, the aim was to look at how local groups can influence, and are influenced by, the local authority. This involved discussion of political and organisational issues in the local state, within the historical context of post-war administration in Leeds City Council. From a detailed review which was carried out with twelve people who attended, it is clear that the course strengthened, or in some cases created interest in, an understanding of various forms of community activity.

The course was a combination of visiting speakers, brief tutor inputs with handouts, and discussion. The speakers included the local Housing Manager, and the new chairman of the housing committee, the day after he had been appointed. The tenants were impressed by the fact that 'educational courses' could cover such topics, call on relevant high-profile speakers, and provide a forum for the discussion of a wide range of topics.

Just as important as the specific topics which were discussed was the fact that the course helped demystify and, indeed, open up the idea of adult education in an area where traditional attitudes to education range from awe to apathy. It was, however, a concept of adult education which was based on joint planning and control by the users. These issues were explicitly discussed with course members.

The community discussion group. After this course, the group felt there was a basis for continuity and called itself the *Community discussion group* (CDG). This was, in part, an attempt deliberately to avoid the use of the word 'education', which it was felt would deter many people, but was also intended to make a distinction between this type of group, and the action groups in the area (although in practice there was overlapping participation).

Organising in the community and at home. The next course, three months later, was *Organising in the community and at home.* The same joint planning process was undertaken and this course had six members who had attended the earlier courses and six newcomers. Several sessions critically reviewed developments which had been examined in the previous course (for example, changes in local housing policy and practice) as well as introductory sessions on other issues which group members themselves identified as important: bringing up children, and women's health.

One unintended consequence of the session on women's health was that an independent self-programming women's health group developed in the area, and continued to meet regularly on an informal basis for several years. Although women's health groups are common in many areas, they do not often develop independently on council estates.

How community groups work. At this stage, joint planning for another course was inhibited by difficulties within the tenants' association. Several members had left disillusioned and there were arguments between remaining members. This serious, but common, problem in community work was turned to educational advantage. Because the CDG and the project were seen as supportive, but outside the local arguments, there was enthusiasm for a course on how community groups work. Case-studies were provided about experience elsewhere, and relevant, detailed handouts given each week as a lead into experiential discussion. This course clarified and strengthened community activism in the area, according to the local community worker.

Know the system. New members had joined an additional tenants' group in the area and the planning group felt that an updated course on *Knowing the system* would be of benefit both to core members and new members. The planning group wanted a course which examined how decisions were taken at the local level, linked to an examination of the role of councillors and officers. Information was also requested about councils' budgets and finances in the context of rate-capping and the abolition of the Metropolitan County Councils.

This course proved the most difficult to prepare. The tutor involved had taught social policy at postgraduate level, but the preparation of relevant materials and handouts for this course, which also drew on participants' own experiences and considerable local knowledge, was extremely time-consuming. The course eventually consisted of a quiz about local government finance and responsibilities, detailed handouts, videos, speakers and discussion. From reviews subsequently carried out with the group, it seems that the mix of teaching methods used proved valuable. Group discussion and the fact that the quiz encouraged active learning rather than passive acceptance were particularly mentioned. It is difficult to find case-studies of other adult education courses with unemployed people and working class groups which discussed in detail such issues as the abolition of the Metropolitan Counties and its effect on their area.

The multiplier effect. As these courses became more established over a period of years, newly emerging tenants' groups from another area requested similar provision. After detailed discussion with them, an updated and revised *Know the system* course was organised with them. In the evaluation the tenants requested a course on housing, since housing issues were their main concern.

A negotiated curriculum – Housing course. It is important to note that as with the earlier courses, the suggestion for the housing course came from the tenants themselves. Not only that, the outline structure of this short course (eight weeks) and its timing and location was decided by them. This control by the tenants of the educational process is crucial if an equal partnership is to be developed by adult educators and 'students'. This is one example of a negotiated curriculum, and is different from simply informing people about what adult education will offer, and calling this a 'negotiated curriculum'.

Course content

Session 1. The functions of the housing department and its organisational structure in the city – based on detailed handouts and also drawing on tenants' experience of the local structure.

Session 2. Housing policy – role play of policies adopted by political parties and policies which tenants would want. The role play was videoed and then played back for discussion.

Session 3. Housing finance – explanation of the housing revenue account. Handouts on expenditure and income, and discussion of debt charges and where the rent money goes. Details of repairs and maintenance costs. Explanation of the Housing Investment Programme. The Council's HIP bid for £74.3m; Government approval for £22m only and the implications for tenants. Details of the council housing stock.

Session 4. Housing management issues – role play of different types of housing management in small groups, followed by discussion of what tenants want, and how they can affect housing management.

Session 5. Attendance at Housing Committee meeting.

Session 6. Critique of Housing Committee meeting – discussion of current waiting list and transfer list priorities and allocation policies (handouts).

Session 7. Current housing policies – small-group discussions on:
  (a) The 'Right to Buy' council houses – arguments for and against.
  (b) Who gains from privatisation – arguments for and against privatisation from the view of the local authority, the tenants and private contractors.

Session 8. Legal issues – the new tenancy agreements, security of tenure, rights *re* repairs, Section 137 and Section 99.

Session 9. Course review and evaluation.

Teaching methods. It is clear from the course content that a variety of teaching methods were used: tutor inputs, detailed handouts, use of video, role plays and general group discussion. The tenants stressed, in the course evaluation, that this variety was important in maintaining interest in the groups, in explaining complex information, and also in involving the quieter members of the group.

The content of each session and a suggested format (role play, tutor input, etc.) was discussed and negotiated with the tenants, not just when the outline structure of the course was agreed with them, but also throughout the course. A truly negotiated curriculum, then, must be developed continuously, and not just at the beginning of the course.

Professional responsibility and the role of the tutor. This notion of continual negotiation and tenants' control over the educational process does not mean, however, the abrogation of professional responsibility. An adult education worker must utilise his/her previous experience in devising content, deciding on appropriate level and pace, and responding to and developing group processes.

In these community-based contexts, the role of tutor must be broadened to include not just detailed knowledge of the subject under discussion, but also detailed knowledge of issues in a particular locality, the ever-changing nature of local community politics, and its impact on groups and individuals in an area. This means that attendance at sessions or courses is, in itself, insufficient. On-going communication patterns must be established both with community workers, if they exist in the area, and/or key members of local groups.

Before the housing course, the immediate concerns and problems of the tenants had to be clearly understood and the tutor had to learn about the development of local groups in the area. It was only on this basis that a housing course could be organised, and more generalised critical liberal adult education take place. Generalised discussion was explicitly built into the course. For example, the role play on housing policy in Session 2 dealt with macro-issues, and there was lengthy discussion in Session 3 on housing finance – particularly the information about rent, which showed that 63.3% of rent money goes on debt charges. After the visit to the Housing Committee meeting, there was a lengthy discussion about the structure and organisation of local authorities which built upon the earlier course on *Know the system.* The evaluation with the tenants indicated that the deliberate combination of specific, 'hard' information, analysis of local problems, and generalised broader discussion worked well.

Outcomes. The tenants have requested a re-run of this type of course as new people become involved with the two tenants' associations which are gradually becoming more established in the area. In addition, they want a more detailed, in-depth course to examine housing management issues more thoroughly and develop their own proposals.

There is, then, evidence of a wish for educational continuity and progression, but not in the traditional sense of access into qualification-based courses.

Reference

1. A. G. Watts and E. G. Knasel *Adult Unemployment and the Curriculum.* FEU/ REPLAN, 1985.

Appendix 2

Two Women's Discussion Groups

Two different women's courses are described here in detail. These courses were established in Leeds at the beginning of 1986 and they continued for a period of between sixteen and twenty weeks. Course 1 took place in a social services nursery. Due to social services nursery policy at that time, there was no crèche for mothers attending the group and therefore those children who were not at the nursery had to stay with their mothers. Course 2 was established at an independent community centre, and a crèche was provided by the Project. Both venues are situated in the inner city.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the two courses were very similar:

Course 1: to combat the isolation of a group of mothers (whether single or in unsupportive relationships); to increase their self-esteem and confidence in themselves generally and in their capacity as parents; to provide an informal setting within which a range of issues could be discussed in a supportive environment.

Course 2: to provide time and space for local women to get together and discuss issues relevant to their lives; to facilitate that discussion through input, videos and speakers; to create a supportive atmosphere where women feel able to express feelings and experiences.

Both groups could be categorised as general discussion groups. Neither focused on one particular topic or subject area. Both tutors aimed to negotiate curriculum with their group and therefore publicity for both courses was deliberately open-ended.

Setting up the Courses

The Project's role in the establishment of the two courses was similar in that Project organisers had been liaising with the two agencies and so when the need for courses was perceived, the Project willingly supplied support. In both cases, the agencies' workers felt there was a need for a women's course but in completely different circumstances.

Course 1. This class was set up in response to the perceived needs of a group of women whose children were either attending the nursery or were on the waiting list. Some of the women had already been attending a weekly 'baby club' with their youngest children, and this had been designed to offer them some contact with the nursery. Many of the women were unsupported, some had difficulties in caring for their children and several were seen as experiencing mental health problems. The nursery staff hoped that these women would form the nucleus of a class. The course was established with the support of nursery workers and health visitors, all of whom encouraged women to attend the group.

Course 2. The idea for a course came from the community centre workers. They felt that there was a need in the area for a women's group and, indeed, some women had asked for one. Most of the women who attended the course were already familiar with the centre, mostly using it for the child-care facilities while they did other activities. Although all the women came to the course through word of mouth, Course 2 did advertise locally and outreach was undertaken, with Centre workers and the tutor speaking to local women and door-to-door leafleting. Recruitment in the nursery, on the other hand, was internal and, therefore, the course was aimed at a specific set of women (those already attending the 'baby club').

Course Planning

Both tutors discussed the difficulty of negotiating the curriculum with their groups.

Course 1. The tutor felt that women had been given differing expectations about the course from nursery workers. Some women viewed her as an extension of a social worker – someone to help sort out problems. The tutor did not wish to impose her ideas, so pre-course planning was left to a minimum. A premium was, then, placed on adequate time and opportunities for support to be offered within the class and for experiences to be shared. It was also important for there to be a welcoming atmosphere for new, shy or ill-at-ease members.

Course 2. In this course, the tutor also stated categorically that she did not want to impose ideas on the women participants. Initially, however, they were unwilling to come forward with suggestions for the course and the tutor was forced to take the lead. This, she feels, was because 'women in the group found it a refreshing change from the rest of their lives to be able to come along to the session without having to be responsible for organising anything beforehand'. Moreover, women lacked confidence in their own ideas and felt shy about speaking in a group. Nevertheless, towards the end of the first eight weeks, when people had become familiar with each other, women began to take the initiative and suggest ideas of their own for future discussion.

The tutor then compiled a list of topics that she felt might interest the group. Those that were given an enthusiastic response became part of the course content. Unlike the nursery class, this group came along to the course expecting input, and they did negotiate curriculum, in so far as they responded either favourably or unfavourably to the tutor's ideas. Throughout the course, the tutor felt that she was under pressure to come up with new ideas for subject areas to discuss, even after women in the group started suggesting topics for themselves.

Course Content

Course content overlapped to some extent, although there were major differences in *how* the content was developed. Course 2 had a plan which was quite strictly adhered to, whereas in Course 1, subject areas were discussed as they arose through informal conversation.

Course 1. The course plan entailed making tea/coffee for women as they arrived, a part of the class 'culture' that was gradually taken on by members themselves. Time was then spent on any individual issues which were raised and which reflected the concerns of the previous week; a child's illness, the non-arrival of DHSS Giros, hospital appointments, and relationships/emotional traumas. These discussions would generally extend into wider topics which included women's experience of contraception, pregnancy and childbirth; surviving on a low income; living alone versus sometimes unsatisfactory relationships with boyfriends/husbands, etc. Other topics would arise from current events or TV programmes, such as a particularly lively discussion on 'rape and rapists'.

Course 2. A variety of topics was introduced over the course: welfare benefits and women; racism; women in manual trades; the role of the housewife and housework; massage; a practical video session; women's health; women's self-defence; women and politics and the film *Educating Rita.*

Teaching Materials and Methods

Possibly the greatest difference between the approach of the two tutors was in the area of teaching materials and methods. In Course 1, as the group deterred the tutor from having a lesson plan, she felt unable to organise materials and aids in advance and therefore she had to depend on trying to derive some more general discussion from people's everyday experiences. In one session, however, she did use educational leaflets when discussing possible choices in educational opportunities for the women. Moreover, the tutor stated that had she known about video materials and equipment available, she would have made use of them as teaching aids.

Although she felt that it was possible to use other teaching methods, she thought that the use of guest speakers would not be appropriate yet, but this would probably change over a period of time, when the group would be less likely to be 'put off' by a stranger. In Course 2, on the other hand, guest speakers were utilised very effectively. 'Outsiders' attended the group to discuss self-defence, women in politics and welfare benefits. The group responded well to this specialist input. Discussion, though, as in Course 1, was the main teaching method. Topics sometimes arose out of general conversation, but specific issues were often put forward for discussion. Lively debate developed around the role of the housewife and housework in relation to women's own lives, and around other issues such as women and manual trades.

Videos were a very popular visual aid, triggering off discussion. *Educating Rita,* although too long, raised many different issues. The video *Why Prejudice* sparked off an important and in-depth discussion on racism in our society, and *Give Us a Smile* raised the issues of violence against women, sexual harassment and images of women.

Outcomes for Participants

Course 1. 'Several very isolated women who initially appeared to find considerable difficulty in joining seemed to find their feet in the class; one with long-standing mental health difficulties emphasised the importance of the class when she wanted to be discharged from psychiatric hospital. The same woman struck up a friendship with another, who invited her to her house for lunch regularly after the class. Within the class existing support networks seemed to be strengthened and new ones developed, the sharing of concern for one another being an important aspect of this. The topic of money – or the lack of it – stimulated a class project in which they combined their own needs with those of the nursery. Shared problems over obtaining cheap clothing and other children's items became formulated into a plan for collecting and selling second-hand equipment . . . At the time the class ended, plans were fixed for a larger-scale jumble sale, and publicity, etc. was organised towards this. I was a little concerned as to whether the need for some members to talk and gain support would become overlooked in this hive of activity, but, overall, the project was a successful demonstration of the progress made within the class in initiating and seeing through their own ideas for collective action.'

Course 2. The tutor felt that the course had definitely raised some of the women's consciousness on issues such as women in manual trades, the women's role at home, etc. Some definitely became more confident: not only did they become more willing to participate in discussion, but they also began to make suggestions on topics for discussion. The tutor felt that members of the group forged strong links. They continued to see each other after the group ceased to meet, and some of them made arrangements to look after each other's children. By the end of the course, the women were ready to move on to other activities, such as woodwork and photography. One of them, in fact, became a worker at the community centre.

Course Outcomes

Course 1. This course continued after the summer break. The tutor stated that if the class was going to continue, the degree of informality could usefully be balanced by a slightly more structured content, although the presence of young children might limit this.

Course 2. This course finished, as the tutor and participants felt that the aims and objectives had been achieved and that people now wished to take advantage of other opportunities.

Difficulties Facing the Tutor

Course 1. The tutor felt that the fact that people had different expectations of the course made her role difficult at times. Apart from being seen as a social worker, she was also viewed by some as a person who would 'sort the others out'. One woman felt that she had been asked to help in the group by the nursery, and then found it difficult to come to terms with the tutor's role. The lack of crèche facilities was an obvious problem for the tutor. She felt that any structure would be limited with the presence of young children. Linked to this was the lack of pre-course planning the tutor could do: she had to 'think on her feet'. As stated before, this prevents the inclusion of various teaching aids and materials within the course.

Course 2. In terms of course planning the tutor stated that she 'began to find it problematic to continue to introduce different topics as the course went along'. Another difficulty was the fact that there was some disagreement amongst the group about the content. The massage session had a mixed reception – some women really enjoyed it, whilst others either deliberately did not attend or were unsure about being involved in the practical demonstration. Although the women wished to discuss issues to do with their everyday lives, some obviously did not want to have detailed discussions regarding their relationships. This is in direct contrast to Course 1, where intimate discussions took place quite freely.

Conclusion

These two groups show two aspects of women's discussion groups. On the one hand, a course is set up in a community where women who already know the venue come along to something where they know there will be educational discussion and information. The nursery course, on the other hand, is established for women who would not have the confidence to attend the community centre course. They feel even more isolated and alienated than the Course 2 group. They do not wish to have any type of course plan, but nevertheless they discuss a whole variety of issues and no doubt receive an abundance of information in the process, both from members of the group and the tutor. Both groups achieve their general aims and objectives, but by different routes, and both achieve a group identity, culminating in self-help in a variety of ways.

Appendix 3

The Student Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Hello, I am from the Pioneer Work Project, University of Leeds. The Pioneer Work Project funds the course that you are doing here, as well as various others throughout Leeds and Bradford. We are doing a survey of people who are coming to our free daytime courses, to get their views and ideas. This will help us to decide how well the courses are running and if they should be changed in any way. Would you like to help us with our survey?

If YES:
I would like to assure you that the interview will be completely confidential. No information will be published that would identify you.

---

1. Where did you learn about the course? CODE ONLY ONE		C16–17
	DK	00
	library	01
	poster	02
	leaflet	03
	newspaper	04
	Job Centre	05
	radio	06
	word of mouth	07
	other: SPECIFY	08
	....	

2. Why did you come to this course? C18 C19

Give comments in full:

....

....

....

3(a) Do you think this course will in any way help you to get a job? C20

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

(b) Why do you say that?

....

....

....

4(a) Could it help you to get onto a course which would give you a qualification? C21

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

(b) If YES: What course are you thinking of? C22

....

....

....

5(a) Have you attended a course on this subject before? C23

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

(b) If YES: What are the differences between this course and the one you attended before? C24

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....

....

(c) If NO: Are any of these a reason for not having attended a course before?

		C25	C26
READ LIST	DK	0	0
CODE UP TO TWO	was working	1	1
	was at school	2	2
	wasn't interested in subject before	3	3
	didn't have time	4	4
	hadn't heard about courses in this subject before	5	5
	No	6	6
	another reason: SPECIFY	7	7

....

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6. Before coming, did you have any ideas about what the course would be like? C27 C28

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7. What have you learnt from the course that you didn't know before?

ENCOURAGE TO GIVE ANSWER IN FULL
(WEEK BY WEEK OF COURSE, IF NECESSARY)

....

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....

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8. Is there anything that you have enjoyed about coming to the course apart from learning about the subject?

		C29	C30
	DK	0	0
	met new people	1	1
CODE UP TO TWO	something to do	2	2
	got me out of the house	3	3
	made new friends	4	4
	No	5	5
other: SPECIFY		6	6

....

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

9. Do you feel you have gained any of these from the course?

SHOW CARD
CODE UP TO 3

	C31	C32	C33
DK	0	0	0
specific information	1	1	1
confidence in speaking	2	2	2
confidence in writing	3	3	3
general confidence	4	4	4
None	5	5	5

Why do you say that?

....

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10. Since coming to the course, do you feel more confident than before about speaking to a group of people?

(PROMPT, WITH LIST, IF REALLY NECESSARY)

	C34
DK	0
Yes, slight increase	1
Yes, great increase	2
No change	3
Worse	4

....

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....

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11. Before coming to this course, had you attended any other courses since leaving school?

	C35
DK	0
Yes	1
No	2 Skip to (c)

(a) What courses have you attended?

CODE UP TO 4

	C36	C37	C38	C39
Vocational	1	1	1	1
Recreational	2	2	2	2
Academic qualifications	3	3	3	3
Basic education	4	4	4	4
Other liberal adult education	5	5	5	5
other: SPECIFY..	6	6	6	6

....

(b) In what ways were they taught differently to this one? C40

....

.... Skip to 12

(c) Is there any reason why you haven't attended courses since leaving school? C41–C42

CODE ONLY ONE – THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON

work	01
school leaver	02
didn't want to	03
didn't know about courses	04
had bad time at school	05
didn't have time	06
transport problems	07
lived too far away from courses	08
No	09
other: SPECIFY	10

....

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

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12. How would you describe your school days? C43

ENCOURAGE FULL RESPONSE

....

....

....

13(a) Would you say that the education you received at school was: C44

SHOW SCALE

DK	0
very satisfactory	1
satisfactory	2
neither satisfactory nor dissatisfactory	3
dissatisfactory	4
very dissatisfactory	5

(b) Why do you say that?

....

....

....

14. Do you think that education is only for young people? C45

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

15(a) Before coming to the course, did you feel cut off from people? C46

Yes 1
No 02

(b) Why do you say that?

....

....

....

16(a) Since coming to the course do you feel more or less isolated from people in general? C47

SHOW CARD

a lot less isolated 1
less isolated 2
no change 3
more isolated 4
a lot more isolated 5

(b) Why do you say that?

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....

....

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17. Has the course helped you to make friends? C48

IF YES: FRIENDS BEYOND THE CLASS?

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

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....

....

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18. How much, if at all, do you think that free daytime courses benefit the unemployed? C49

SHOW CARD		
	a lot	1
	quite a lot	2
	neither a lot nor at all	3
	not much	4
	not at all	5

Why do you say that?

....

....

....

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19. Many unemployed people do not come to free courses, why do you think this is? C50–C51

CODE ONLY ONE – THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON		
	DK	00
	child-care	01
	their school experience	02
	transport costs	03
	lack of interest	04
	don't know about them	05
	lack of confidence	06

other: SPECIFY 07

....

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

20(a) Which of the following, if any, are reasons why you would come to free daytime courses?

SHOW CARD AND CODE UP TO 3 – RANK IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE		C52	C53	C54
	gain specific information	1	1	1
	to meet people	2	2	2
	develop personal interests	3	3	3
	help get a job	4	4	4
	talk about unemployment	5	5	5
	something to do	6	6	6
	get help with problems to do with being unemployed	7	7	7
	none of these	8	8	8

(b) Are there any other reasons why you would come to free daytime courses?

....

....

....

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21. Has the course helped with the problems you face being out of work? C55–C56

CODE ONLY ONE

DK	00
got me out of the house	01
using my time better	02
got me interested in something	03
got useful information	04
made me more sociable	05
No	06
other: SPECIFY	07

....

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

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....

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22. Is there anything about the tutor's teaching style that you find particularly helpful/enjoyable? C57

ENCOURAGE FULL ANSWER

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....

....

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23. Is there anything about the tutor's teaching style that you dislike? C58

ENCOURAGE FULL ANSWER

....

....

....

24(a) Which of these teaching methods do you find particularly helpful?

SHOW CARD AND CODE UP TO 3

	C59	C60	C61
DK	0	0	0
discussion	1	1	1
video film	2	2	2
other people's stories	3	3	3
pamphlets/handouts	4	4	4
formal talk/lecture	5	5	5
books/magazines	6	6	6
none of these	7	7	7

(b) Why do you say that?

ENCOURAGE FULL ANSWER

....

....

....

(c) Are there any other teaching methods that you find helpful?

....

....

....

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25 Do you think about issues to do with ....(subject area) when you're not actually at the course?

	C62	
DK	0	
Yes	1	
No	2	Skip to 26

What kind of issues do you think about? C63

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

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26 Has being on the course encouraged you to:

PROBE EACH 'YES' (WHAT HAVE YOU READ?)

(a) Read about the subject

	C64
DK	0
No	1
Yes – books	2
Yes – magazines	3
Yes – pamphlets	4

Yes – other: SPECIFY 5

....

....

....

(b) Write? C65

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

....

(c) Discuss the subject with friends or family? C66

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

....

(d) Think about doing a more detailed course on the subject? C67

PROBE WHAT COURSE? – IF RESPONDENT UNSURE, TRY TO COUNSEL

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

....

(e) Think about major social and political issues in general? C68

PROBE – CAN YOU GIVE SOME EXAMPLES?

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

....

27(a) Are there any ways in which this course could be improved? C69

DK	0
Yes	1
No	2

(b) CODE AND GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

Why do you say that?

....

....

....

28. Would you like to see this course extended? C70

DK	0
Yes	1
No	2

....

....

....

29. What would you say were the main benefits of the course? C71

....

....

....

30. What would you say were the main disappointments or disadvantages of the course? C72

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....

....

31(a) Since you started attending this course, have you considered doing any others? C73

DK	0	
Yes	1	
already started doing another	2	
No	3	Skip to 32

(b) **Which courses have you either started, or considered starting?**

CODE UP TO 3
AND WRITE SUBJECTS

	C74	C75	C76
DK	0	0	0
vocational	1	1	1
recreational	2	2	2
academic (qualifications)	3	3	3
other liberal adult education	4	4	4
other: SPECIFY	5	5	5

....

....

AFTER QUESTION IS ANSWERED, IF POSSIBLE, TRY TO COUNSEL

---

32. If you wanted information about various courses where would you go?

CODE ONLY ONE
IF RESPONDENT DOESN'T
KNOW – COUNSEL

	C77
DK	0
Job Centre	1
Community Centre	2
Unemployed Centre	3
Adult education (i.e. EASA, Corn Exchange)	4
specific institution	5
library	5

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....

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33. Are there any other subjects that you would like to see offered?

CODE UP TO 3
AND WRITE SUBJECTS

	C78	C79	C80
DK	0	0	0
vocational	1	1	1
recreational	2	2	2
survival skills (i.e. welfare rights)	3	3	3
basic education	4	4	4
academic	5	5	5
other liberal adult education	6	6	6
other: SPECIFY	7	7	7

....

....

34(a) **What do you think of the place where the course is held?** C81

SHOW CARD

DK	0
very satisfactory	1
satisfactory	2
either satisfactory nor dissatisfactory	3
dissatisfactory	4
very dissatisfactory	5

(b) **Why do you say that?**

....

....

....

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35. **Where would you like courses to be held?** C82

....

....

....

36(a) Do you have children? C83

Yes	1	
No	2	Skip to 38

(b) How old are they? C84

under 2	1
2–5	2
6–10	3
11–18	4
18+	5

37(a) Do you think having children prevents you from going to courses? C85

DK	0
Yes	1
No	2

(b) Why do you say that?

....

....

....

38. Do you think child-care facilities are important for day-time courses? C86

READ SCALE

DK	0
very important	1
important	2
neither important nor unimportant	3
unimportant	4
very unimportant	5

---

39. How far do you travel to this course (in miles)? C87

DK	0
under ½	1
½–1	2
1+	3
2+	4
3+	5
4+	6
5–10	7
10+	8

....

....

....

---

40. How do you travel to the course? C88

walk	1
car	2
bus	3
train	4

other: SPECIFY 5

....

....

....

---

41. How far would you be prepared to travel to do a course (in miles)? C89

DK	0
under ½	1
½–1	2
1+	3
2+	4
3+	5
4+	6

5–10	7	
10+	8	

....

....

....

May I ask you some questions about not being employed?

42(a)	Are you registered as unemployed?	C90	
	Yes	1	Skip to 43
	No	2	
(b)	What is the reason for you not being registered?	C91	
	DK	0	
	retired	1	
	disabled/sickness	2	
	full-time parent/household responsibilities	3	
	employed part-time	4	All 42(b)
	other: SPECIFY	5	go to 44

EXPLAIN TERM UNWAGED

43.	How did you become unemployed?	C92	
	made redundant	1	
	sacked	2	
	gave up voluntarily	3	
	on short term contract	4	
	never worked since leaving school	5	
	other: SPECIFY	6	

44.	How long have you been unemployed/unwaged?	C93	
	less than 3 months	1	
	more than 3 months – less than 6 months	2	
	more than 6 months – less than 1 year	3	
	more than 1 year – less than 2 years	4	
	more than 2 years – less than 5 years	5	
	more than 5 years	6	
	never worked	7	Skip to 48

45.	What was your last job?		C94
	PROBE (LEVEL OF SKILL, SENIORITY)	I	1
	GIVE FULL DETAILS – DO *NOT* CODE	II	2
		IIIa	3

		IIIb	4	
		IV	5	
		V	6	

....

....

....

46.	Is this your usual occupation?		C95	
		Yes	1	Skip to 47
		No	2	
	What is your usual occupation?		C96	
	PROBE (LEVEL OF SKILL, SENIORITY)	I	1	
	GIVE FULL DETAILS – DO *NOT* CODE	II	2	
		IIIa	3	
		IIIb	4	
		IV	5	
		V	6	

....

....

....

47.	Had you been unemployed before your last job?		C97	
		Yes	1	
		No	2	Skip to 48
	How long were you employed for?		C98	
		less than 3 months	1	
		more than 3 months – less than 6 months	2	
		more than 6 months – less than 1 year	3	
		more than 1 year – less than 2 years	4	
		more than 2 years – less than 5 years	5	
		more than 5 years	6	

DON'T ASK RETIRED OR DISABLED (SKIP TO 50)

48.	Are you looking for full-time or part-time work?		C99	
		DK	0	
		full-time	1	Skip to 50
		part-time	2	Skip to 50
		No	3	

49. Do you wish to work some time in the future? C100

DK 0
Yes 1
No 2

---

50. At what age did you complete your full-time education? C101

13 01
14 02
15 03
16 04
17 05
18 06
19 07
20 08
20–25 09
25+ 10

---

51. Do you have any qualifications? C102

---

52. Before you became unemployed/unwaged, did you have any interest/hobbies/activities? C103–C104

53(a) Since you have become unemployed/unwaged, have you taken up any interests/hobbies/activities? C105–C106

(b) Have any of these activities been taken up as a direct consequence of coming to this course? C107

Yes 1
No 2

Why is that so?

IF YES, GIVE DETAILS

....

....

....

---

54. Before you became unemployed/unwaged, were you active in?

READ LIST the community (i.e. tenants' group) C108
CODE AND GIVE DETAILS Yes 1
No 2

....

....

trade union C109
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

political party C110
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

club C111
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

church/mosque/temple C112
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

55(a) Since becoming unemployed/unwaged, have you become active in?

READ LIST
CODE AND GIVE DETAILS

the community C113
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

trade union C114
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

political party C115
Yes 1
No 2

....

....

club	C116
Yes	1
No	2

....

....

church/mosque/temple	C117
Yes	1
No	2

....

....

(b) Have any of these activities been taken up as direct consequence of coming to this course? C118

IF YES, WHY IS THAT SO? GIVE DETAILS

Yes	1
No	2

....

....

---

56. When you first became unemployed/unwaged, what did you spend most of your time doing? C119

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

---

57. Would you say that you use your time differently now? C120

GIVE COMMENTS IN FULL

....

....

....

---

58. How old are you? C121

16–25	1
26–35	2
36–45	3
46–55	4
56–65	5
65+	6

59. Sex		C122
	male	1
	female	2

Would you be prepared to assist me with some questions in the future?

If YES, may I have your name and address, and if you have one, your telephone number:

....

....

....

Thank you very much for talking to me today.

Appendix 4

The Tutor Questionnaire

INTERVIEW NUMBER:

DATE OF COURSE:

LOCATION OF COURSE:

General

1. Did you enjoy teaching the course?
2. Were there aspects of the course that you particularly (a) enjoyed; (b) disliked?
3. What particular aspects of the course do you think the students (a) enjoyed; (b) disliked?
4. Did you find that the course was a positive social experience for students?
   If Yes To what extent?
   How did you know?
5. Before, during or after the course, were you cast into a role, other than that of tutor?

   PROBE:
   outreach worker,
   welfare rights
6. Did you give any kind of education advice, guidance or counselling?
   If Yes How did this come about?
   Give details

   LEVEL OF ADVICE:
   (a) send to agency
   (b) discuss other PW courses
   (c) discuss CE courses
   (d) discuss FE/HE
   (e) vocational training
   (f) employment

Progress/Outcome of Students

7. Why do you think students have attended this course?	PROBE: interest in subject, social aspects, etc.
8. Did you feel that students who regularly attended made tangible progress during the course?	PROBE: whether within subject area – specific skill; or without – confidence
If Yes How did you assess this?	
If No Why did you think this was the case?	
9. At the end of the course what do you think the outcomes were for the students?	
(a) specific	FE, vocational training
(b) general	confidence, personal growth, social interaction

Internal problems and difficulties

10. Did people drop out of the course?

To what extent, how many?
Why do you think people dropped out?

(If drop-outs or late new entrants)

11. How did you cope with the fluid nature of class numbers?

12. (a) What was the length of
    (i) the sessions ....
    (ii) the course ....

(b) What did you think of the length of (i) the sessions? (ii) the course?	PROBE: too long/ too short

13. Did you feel that the course satisfied some students more than others?

Why do you say that?

14. Would you say that it was a homogeneous or a heterogeneous group?

    Why do you say that?

15. Did you have any kind of difficulties with individual class members?

    How did you deal with this?

16. What other problems, if any, did you encounter?

External problems and difficulties

17. What do you feel about the place in which the course was held?

18. Did you find any difficulty obtaining equipment, teaching aids or any other resources?

    Support from PW or elsewhere?

19. How was the class publicised?

Course content

20. Can you describe the course content? In detail.

21. What were the factors determining your course content?

    Did these change during the course?

PROBE: Social background, educational level, physical aspects, group structure

22. Do you feel that your content was pitched at the appropriate level for the group?

Aims and objectives

23. What were your aims and objectives?

24. To what extent have they been realised?

25. How important would you say each of the following was in your mind when establishing the aims and objectives? SHOW SCALE.

(a) encouraging personal growth
(b) developing practical skills
(c) encouraging educational/academic attainment
(d) empowering students to take more control of their own lives
(e) encouraging students to become more politically aware
(f) encouraging students to become tutors themselves
(g) encouraging students to obtain a liberal education

Discuss if the above aims were, from the tutor's point of view, attained.

26. Do you see your course as a type of 'access course' leading towards

(a) educational qualifications
(b) vocational training
(c) job?

If No **Why not?**

27. How important, if at all, do you think the idea of *aims* is in relation to adult education courses for the unemployed?
Give reasons/expand.

Course planning

28. How did you go about designing a lesson plan for the course?
What were the determinants?
Student input?

PROBE: type of group, structure of group, subject matter, constraints

29. How did you plan the sessions?

Tutor input, projects, guest speakers

What was the most successful/least successful aspect of the sessions?

30. Did the course differ from your expectations?

Teaching methods

31. Which teaching methods did you use?
Advantages/limitations? Student input?

(If discussion mentioned:)

32. How did you facilitate student participation in class discussion?

PROBE: Act as chair, determine topic, control student responses

Teaching materials

33. What teaching materials did you use?
How did you select them?
Advantages/limitations?

Educational philosophy

34. Are your aims and methods based on any particular theory or philosophy?

PROBE: role of tutor, role of students

If Yes How did you arrive at this position?

If No Do you think it matters?

Social and political issues

35. Were you as a tutor, deliberately or explicitly trying to widen the topic to include social and political issues?

Give concrete examples.

36. Do you think part of your role as a tutor is to raise people's political and/or social consciousness?

If so, how and why?

37. During the course, did you find yourself involved in questions of value and judgement?

If so, specify?

How did you deal with this?

Outcome for course

38. What is happening to the course now?

If continuing with PW – in same form?

39. Do you foresee any problems with a follow-on from this course?

(If handover)

40. Do you think another agency taking over funding will alter the course in any way?

What do the students feel about the handover process?

Tutors' experience of course

41. How did you become involved in teaching the course?

42. Have you any other experience of non-formal adult education – either as tutor or student?

If Yes What agency?

What course?

If Tutor What were the differences, if any, between this course and previous ones?

43. How did you evaluate the course's success/failure?

PROBE: Numbers, knowledge gained, outcome for students

44. In what respects, if any, do you feel you have failed as a tutor on this course?

45. What have you learned from teaching this course?

Organisation

46. Can you explain to me what the Pioneer Work Project is?

47. Does your approach to the course reflect in any way the fact that you are funded by the University Adult Education Department?

(If taught for other agencies:)

48. Do you feel that the attitude of the PW project towards adult education and the unemployed differs in any way from that of other agencies?

49. As a part-time tutor, do you feel isolated in your work?

50. What kind of support do you receive from PW?

51. What support would you like from PW?

Personal aspects

52. Could you please tell me about your educational background and teaching experience?

PROBE: Pedagogical training

53. Besides part-time teaching, what other employment do you have or have had in the past?

    How long have you lived in Leeds/Bradford?

54. How old are you?

Tutor on tutors

55. What would you say are the qualities that make a good and bad tutor in this particular field of adult education?

56. It has been said that in a good class, each student is a teacher and each teacher a student. How true is this?

Appendix 5

The Longitudinal Questionnaire

In the spring of 1986 a longitudinal questionnaire was devised for the student sample in order to ascertain more clearly their outcomes from the courses. Although experience has shown that the response rate from postal questionnaires is very low, it was hoped that people would already feel involved in the research and would therefore be more likely to respond. The questionnaire was kept as brief as possible.

Unfortunately, a few days after the questionnaire was sent to students, there was a postal industrial dispute at Leeds for over six weeks, completely halting the local postal service. Thus, the questionnaire returns were very low. Fourteen people sent back completed questionnaires, four of whom were women now working part-time. Nobody who responded had full-time employment. One woman who had undertaken the *New technology* course said that it had helped her to find a job. Another said that the course had given her the confidence to go out and search for work. One person who responded was due to start an accountancy course and felt that doing the *New technology* course had helped her make up her mind to study seriously.

Five people said that they were now more involved or active in their communities as a result of being involved on the Pioneer Work course. They had attended either the *Community issues* course or one of the women's discussion groups.

People were asked whether they had attended any other course since they were interviewed. From the fourteen who responded, nine said that they had; seven of these were follow-on Pioneer Work courses, the two others were now involved in local LEA qualification-based courses.

Further points about people's increased confidence levels and their developing interest in adult education could be extracted from the fourteen responses. Given the low response rate, however, any generalisations would be highly provisional and difficult to justify statistically.

Dear

You may remember that I interviewed you during the Spring and Summer of 1985 at.............................. We discussed in detail then your views of the course/meetings you have been to about.......................with ....

Through interviews with people like yourself, we have learnt a great deal about the courses we organise and how they could be improved. Thank you for your help at that time.

We wondered whether you would be willing to help us in another way. It is now several months since we talked and we were wondering if your views about the course/meetings you attended are the same now as they were then.

We would be extremely grateful if you would answer the questions on the enclosed sheet and send it back to us as soon as possible in the stamped addressed envelope.

Yours sincerely

(Signed)
Lindsey Fraser
20 March 1986

QUESTIONS ARE RELATED TO THE COURSE YOU WERE ATTENDING WHEN I INTERVIEWED YOU.

1 Have you attended any other courses since the one when you were interviewed?

Yes ☐ No ☐

IF YES PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 2 AND 3, IF NO PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 4, 5a AND 5b

IF YES

2. What other courses have you attended? ....

3. Did you attend these other courses for any of the following reasons:

PLEASE TICK REASONS
GIVE UP TO 3

for specific information ☐
out of interest ☐
help fill in the time ☐
get out of the house ☐
keep mentally active ☐
to help get a job ☐
to help get a qualification ☐
none of these ☐
any other reason ....

IF NO

4. Are any of the following reasons why you haven't attended any other courses?

PLEASE TICK REASONS
GIVE UP TO 2

have got a job ☐
am doing vocational training ☐
too busy at home ☐
have young children to look after ☐
don't know about other courses ☐
am still attending the same course ☐
am too busy with hobbies/ voluntary work ☐
no courses that interest me ☐
any other reason ....

5(a) Would you like to attend a new course on the same subject you attended before? Yes ☐ No ☐

5(b) Would you like to attend the same type of course as before but on a different subject? Yes ☐ No ☐

If YES, What? ....

PLEASE ANSWER *ALL* OF THE FOLLOWING:

6. As a result of the course, are you now more aware of other courses in Leeds? Yes ☐ No ☐

---

7. Do you feel you gained any of the following from attending the course?

PLEASE TICK UP TO 3

specific information ☐
confidence in speaking ☐
confidence in writing ☐
general confidence ☐
meeting new people/making new friends ☐
having an interest in something new ☐
none ☐
other ....

---

8. Looking back, would you say that the course was:

PLEASE TICK 1

very satisfactory ☐
satisfactory ☐
neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory ☐
unsatisfactory ☐
very unsatisfactory ☐

Why do you think this? ....

---

9. Did the course help you to:

PLEASE TICK UP TO 2

find a job ☐
do vocational training ☐
do another course ☐
do voluntary work ☐
work in the community ☐
take an interest in other people ☐
anything else ....

10. Did the course motivate you to do any of the following:

		Yes	No
PLEASE TICK YES OR NO	read books about the subject	☐	☐
	read magazines/newspapers	☐	☐
	write	☐	☐
	get more involved in your community	☐	☐
	think about social and political issues to do with the subject	☐	☐
	do some studying on the subject yourself	☐	☐
	think about doing a more detailed course on the subject	☐	☐

---

11. Which category would you put yourself into now:

PLEASE TICK 1	registered unemployed	☐
	retired	☐
	sick/disabled	☐
	full-time parent/household responsibilities	☐
	work full-time	☐
	work part-time	☐
	vocational training	☐
	in full-time education	☐
	other..	

---

12. When you were interviewed, which category would you have put yourself into?

PLEASE TICK 1	registered unemployed	☐
	retired	☐
	sick/disabled	☐
	full-time parent/household responsibilities	☐
	work part-time	☐
	other..	

---

13. Any other comments about the course:

....

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS

EDUCATION FROM EVERYDAY LIVING

This is an account of the development and evaluation of a range of experimental community-based courses for unemployed people run in Leeds and Bradford.

Based on the activities of the Pioneer Work action-research project run by the Department of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Leeds, it is of interest to everyone concerned with developing educational opportunities for unemployed people.

Drawing on the experience of students and tutors Education From Everyday Living examines courses which were not designed to lead to formal qualifications nor focused on specific vocational outcomes. It looks at:

- the characteristics of the students and the expectations they had of education
- course planning and content and teaching styles
- the benefits of inter-agency collaboration in organising and marketing courses in the community
- the outcomes of courses for students and tutors

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